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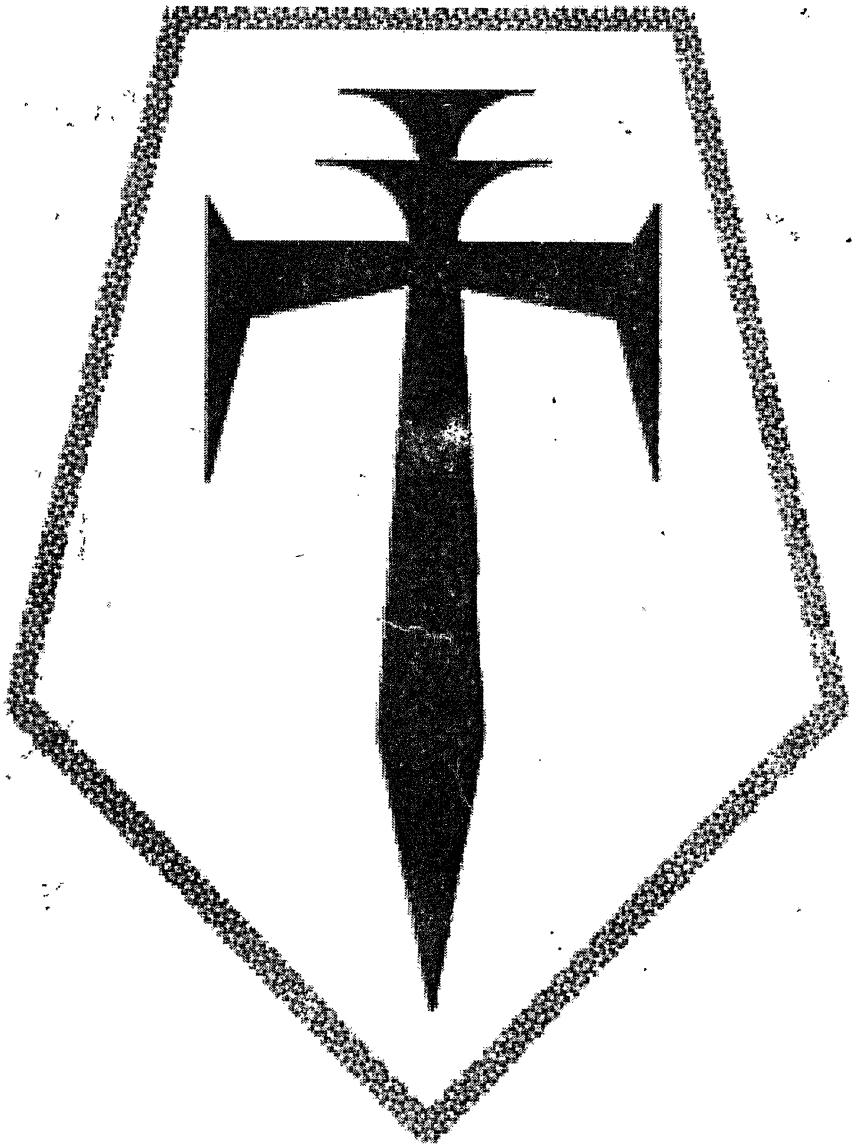

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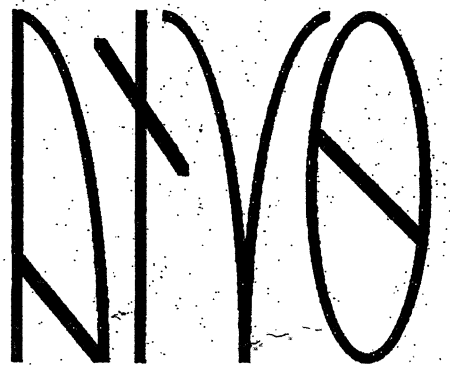

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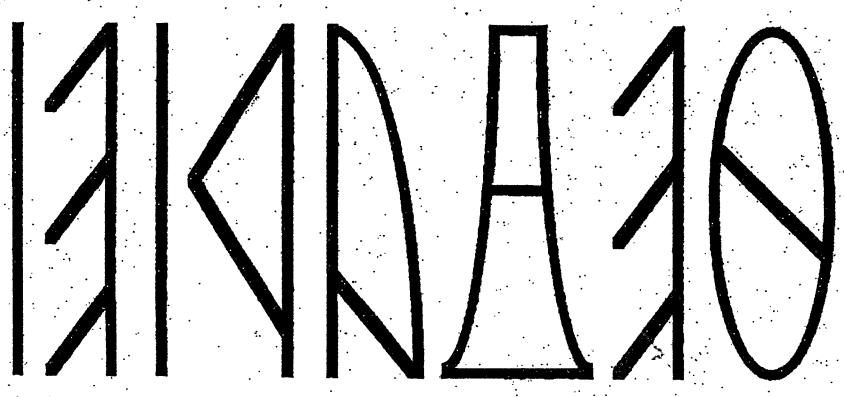

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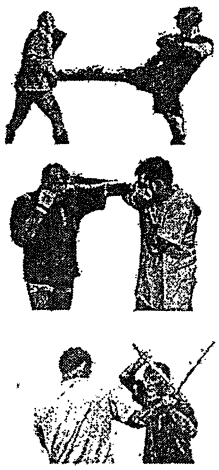

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mini-Preface
to Version 9.0

This year's—1995's—breastbeating would be much the same as last year's, which was really, if you look at it with compassion (which is what it's *for*, for heaven's sake), a rather eloquent whine. Ergo, being in a hurry to get this out this week, much earlier in November than before, I leave it to last year's Preface to tug at your heartstrings and such. Maybe, just maybe, I can supply the long-awaited graphics to HT 31. Or maybe not till later. But, in any case, note that this paragraph is being written less than 50 weeks after what immediately follows.

ATTEST: ðsp, 6 November 1995, Ta.

Preface
to Version 8.0

It was doubtless a mistake, undertaking this revision at the year's end. There were other tasks, other obligations screaming to be done, done immediately, done *now*, and the last thing in the world to be attended to, pretty near, was the overhaul of ΘEFARIEN MATERIALS. It wasn't that it was needed at the moment; it could lie doggo for another eleven months, and the worlds—that one and this one—would be none the poorer. It's a short-term Germelshausen or Brigadoon, is High Thefarie. It clicks into reality late every autumn, has its month in the dwindling sun, and then winks out, disappears from any ken around, even ðsp's, until the next leaf-fall.

But the term, [Fall 1993] had been peculiar. Two sections of ParaGeoGraphy had necessitated two distinct and different final examinations, or *Terminal Praxeis*, as they're termed. Which meant that the Proprietor's powers of recollection, of creative ἀνάμνησις, had had to supply two absolutely unrelated lumps of Thefariena for their lucubrations. . . and that, as a result, he was taken over by the surge. Grades were done and in, Christmas was upon the land, and still he slogged at the trivia and impedimenta of that Otherworld.

Oh, he had a reason; he always has. *How nice*, he thought, *if next Fall I had this all in hand, and didn't have to worry about having to do an update that I never get around to doing? Just assemble the stuff that's come out this time—Mog and Brummagem—so that the booklet's ready to print from Day One, Fall, 1994? That should be simple enough; a day or two now, while it's still fresh.*

And off he slid, on the easy, icy descent to the ninth circle.

The anamnetic wheels were still whirring, you see. The only trouble was, they whirred to a screeching halt with the arrival of RW 1994...and here Your P&G is, on the antepenultimate day of November in that year of gracelessness, trying to Pull It All Together. Ahead, at this moment, is the xeroxing, and the assemblage, and the trip to Ginny's, and the sickening realization that HT 31 will necessarily have some blanks [due to overenthusiasm almost a year ago], and the last two weeks of class, and the Preliminary Statement on the TERMINAL PRAXIS for the last class day, and the PostPreliminary Statement for the week following, and the PRAXIS itself, which is rather like writing the Book of Leviticus from scratch, and the hideous recrimination: *It didn't have to be this way; he brought it all upon himself.*

But, then, he always does this...

This revision is not so thorough as it should be, but more searching than it ought to have been. Does that make sense? Anyway, there are typos remaining that cry for attention, but cannot, in the present scheme of things, receive it. And there are graphics that should be redone. But it does look *prettier*, by heaven, and that's a plus. The only one there's likely to be. Sigh and sigh again.

It's much too long. But there's still a bit of room for you to do your quickening work. With which happy thought he shall depart for the moment.

TURCE MURILA,
Douglass Parker
28 November 1994

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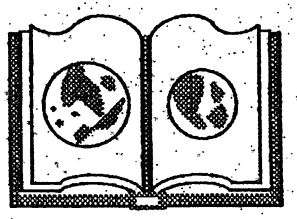


TINUSI SATURE
ac
OUTA OEFARIEI

A Clutch of PREFACES

PREFACE
to Version 1.0 [1987]

This book is an effort to effect a future by encysting a past. Since 1982, I have been dribbling out the tale of High Thefarie—that oh so estimable otherwhere—in gouts of handouts, one or two a week during throughout the Fall term, to the politely bemused denizens of CC322. Initially, when the accrued material amounted to no more than twelve pages, this was practical: It led to no great consumption of paper, and left me room to add to the chronicle. But now, with sixty-and-counting pages of Stuff, I could proceed through the entire term merely handing out the accumulation of material already complete—and, without necessity's strong breath on my neck, would do just that, leaving High Thefarie to wait on the exigencies of the Terminal Praxis for its future, its adumbration, its filling out. That's far too long a wait; the country is in need. Hence this fling at—to use a word which I never thought would come into association, at least in this world, with High Thefarie, or Periphrastes, or Eniaca—*publication*.

Here, then, are the first thirty-two High Thefarie Handouts. There have been occasional revisions, mostly of the picky variety, or else those attendant upon the change in format. I think, however, that I can say that their essential, soporific nature, which has endeared them to class upon class of insomniacs, remains unchanged, and may, in fact, have been intensified by their collection in one place. It is a cheering thought in these latter days that the catalytic action of such a small thing as Format may have induced Progress.

Douglass Parker
September 1987

PREFACE
to Version 2.2 [1988]

It is Our pleasure to announce that the publication of High Thefarien fragments is now under New Management, one that fully intends to facilitate, expedite, and coerce, if necessary, their speedy appearance.

This new version scarcely constitutes a full revision, but some obvious errors have been corrected. As might have been expected, DSP's hoped-for flood of additions proved little more than a trickle; still, We have included such items as did occur during Fall Term 1987—HT 32-36 plus material from the Terminal Praxis embodied in HT 37-38—and revised the Tentative Chronology in their light. . . . Some additions have been made to the Map, HT 1, but the various subject Indices, and the wildly needed Thefarien/English Glossary, remain In Progress. We have also elicited from DSP an Epilogue that sets forth some areas of Thefariena where Work Needs To Be Done.

This year, he's *got* to get organized.

We shall see that he does....

/s/ The Powers That Be
September, 1988

PREFACE
to Version 3.01 [1989]

It is DSP's pleasure to announce the restoration of the *status quo ante*. Of the Palace Revolt, the sudden bursting from Durance Vile in the Heating Tunnels, the story is too long to retail here; suffice it to say that DSP, in his verdigris years, is once more captain of his destiny, commander of his fate, and, in short, responsible for—in fact, guilty of—the continued increase of all this stuff.

Not that there's all that much this year, of course.

And it's late, very late. And the map still isn't redone, not to say complete. And the agenda laid out so huffily in the Epilogue to Version 2.2 is still little more than a gline somewhere. *There was the late Srping to contend with, and the rather unsettled state of the Roads, resulting in the. . . .* Ah, well. Freedom, that's the important thing. My own master.

With just one worry.

Have I *forgotten*? Sloshing grimly through the same river twice, am I leached of neurons by Time's Flood? Can I recall the specific decorations of two non-contiguous chambers in Brummagem, the plumbing of a cell in Ywis, an elbow-cushion in Slothhouse, the dizzying configurations of the Obscene Orrery at the approach of the Terribly Twisted Trine? Could I still exercise a ΩΙΝΙΩ, or exercise a ΧΩΛÇ? And most to be feared, does Eniaca fray at the edges, break into dots, fade into grey and out, as I approachin the RealWorld—crabwise, of course—the age at which all this peaked in high Thefarie?

CΛΘ keep my memory green. We'll see.

Douglass Parker
November 1989

PREFACE
to Version 4.0 [1990]

Should it, come down to it, really be 4.0? Has the past year contributed sufficient increase in knowledge and technique to justify a full .99 upsurge in numeration? Probably not. There was, of course, the unveiling of *LastQuest* **Piglet**, a misbegotten meander into maplessness that managed to extend experience without expanding knowlegdge. . . but, in spite of the painfully systematic breadown, no one seem to know precisely What Happened, and the Words of the Wyrm remain as cryptic as ever. Nor can the *Godtrust Introit* be dated with any certainty. And the rest is vanilla. Not much for a year.

On the other hand, there is a great deal to be said for *neatness* in enumeration. Fractional quantities, however truly they might express the situation, can impose a rhetorical diminuendo that downplays events which, at their happening, shook the world. Many Norteamericanos have trouble assigning importance to soccer matches for this reason: it's difficult to file a 6-nil defeat under the heading of Unter Destruction. And consider the scoring in football: recast it, allowing one point for a touchdown, 1/2 point for a field goal, 1/6 point for a PAT, and glory vanishes, reducing the bloody Armageddon of my prepubescence, the Bears' 73-0 annihilation of the Redskins in 1941, to a 12 1/6-to-zip yawner at something like cribbage. . . .

But No. Even granted that, if Truth were the only consideration, 3.015 would probably be too high a number for this Version, I'll go with a full, round, 4.0. Not only neat and clean, but it implies a certain perfection. Full Marks, an A, a Peak, a ΩΛΧ.[1] Inaccurate, to say the least, but it just may push the compiler of this conglomeration into Getting On With It. With a 4.0, all this must be important.

Mustn't it?

Douglass Parker
August 1990

[1] To have the like effect in Thefarien, of course, it would have to rate a 5.0, but this trivia is becoming much too complicated. . . and I could not, in all conscience, elevate the number that far.

μετα PREFACE

butter wont melt
in his mouth nor
would it want to

i appeal to you out there
does this strike you as an
object to be **proud** of

he treats it as if
it were a **datum**
fervens sakes

and pompous oh
my goodness me
he sounds **stuffed**

shouldnt a man his age
find something better
to do with his time

i mean just look
at all the whole
cloth required
for a **lie** like this
to float just a bit

he pretends of course
that it has a marked
pedagogical value

B
U
T

you and i know for sure
that this is no more than
arrested development

self-indulgence in the young is perhaps to be forgiven by reason of ignorance
self-indulgence in the aged deserves and shall receive the darkness of the pit

bearing which in mind
it is suggested that you
the hapless and helpless
captive audience for this
accumulation of drivel
flout your hoary torturer
by

learning as much
as you can about
this silly place that
he made up there i
said it and i m glad
making it

making up all sorts of
connections between every
part of this mishmash and
every other part and then
asking him about each one
all up till he
that ll teach him oh yes
indeedy

setting him questions
about his fabled spot
each chance you get
thus forcing him to
spend oceans of time
goes mad

TURCE MURILA,

[a friend]

INTRODUCTION

When Osp had the doing, and Chaos thus reigned, these bits and pieces, literally Handed Out to the Faithful one at a time, were intended to be solved *progressively*, by inspection. We are forced to admit that such was a fair strategy for the days of the dribbles. By the time a given *Carissimus/a* had worked his/her way to the first crack in the mask, HT Handout 5, there had been at least two weeks to reflect on what might be going on. And, as the subsequent Handouts appeared, the time-passage itself functioned in the process. One could ponder a new Handout, fit it into the growing accumulation, much as a cautious poker player contemplates a new-drawn deuce, deliberates, then gives it reasoned placement in his hand.

But now—to pursue the figure—the game has become one of the wilder variants of Canasta, where the participant suddenly finds a whole deck in the fist, and the possible relationships between cards have multiplied almost exponentially. The *Carissima/us*, dealt the whole mess at once, may give up in despair, especially when the discovery is made that the arrangement of the Handouts is by no means chronological, that it indeed approaches the random. It has thus been thought necessary, on the grounds of feasibility if nothing else, to introduce the fragments of Osp's stay in High Thefarie with a Tentative Chronology, locating at least the principal events within the continuum. For the basic situation the eager *Carissimus/a* should still seek out the fifth Handout—"High Thefarie 5," in this presentation. The workings of time will be explained, to a certain extent, in "High Thefarie 20."

Let Us supply a note of warning which may not be amiss. Osp's record-keeping was never better than chaotic, and it is only too possible that Error may lurk in the lines below. We, The Management, earnestly solicit information on mistakes, his or Ours, obvious or other.

[*First promulgated 1988*]

Tentative Chronology 8.0[1]

ᵭsp in High Thefarie

XV 573-XV 625/XVI 1

[NB: Dates are, of course, XV unless otherwise specified. Numbers in brackets indicate the age to which the reconstituted ᵭsp attained in the year in question. References in parentheses—e.g., (HT 21)—are to specific Handouts; they date, not the composition of, but the event referred to in, a given piece.]

573: [18 minus 10 days—from RW date 17 May 1979, at RW age 52 minus 10 days]
Spring$_2$: ᵭsp arrives in Bredna's Bight, off Godtrust; rescued by W. Windlass
Vestibule (HT 2)

---

[1] Around 1990 RW, the Chronology was divided into a configuration termed PlotSplit: 5 parts, plus a 6th, or ᵭUΘN, to permit a sequential pentalogy-plus-appendices. Since this at least groups what is otherwise a long passage through chaos, is used here, though it is not perfect. Here's a key to what might happen to the Sojourn in the utterly unlikely event of its ever being written up:

Part I, ΘUN / **In**, runs from the arrival in 573 through the second Public **DISGRACE** in 584.
A good title might be *Too Much, Too Soon.* As narrative, somewhat of a mess. The main purpose would be exposition, learning the land, but there are too many climaxes, too much, well, *degradation*—though the reader would have to get used to that—and no clear single goal. The big items: Eniaca, Trolltrial, Operation Breakout including the Battle of Wormless, and the **DISGRACE**s.

Part II, ZΛL / **Around**, runs from the recruitment in 585 through the Concert and Ascension in 607.
The one that concerns us this year, RW 1993 CE. Target year is 599, of course, but we shall look back to the First Theatre Tour in 588. But this volume would, again, be a mess. Those theatrical forays *plus* The Enna Tour, Clus, QuestLost Castle, the Sale at Mog, the Concert...Nothing *big*. Nothing big at all.

Part III, CI / **Under**, runs from whatever happened in 608 through the Concord of Lake Seemly in 614.
Trivial. I mean, if the greatest thing is a catastrophe in landscape gardening, what can you do? Of course, the Rift in the Succession came right at the end, and led to the Concord. It might work.

Part IV, ÇΛ / **Over**, runs from the settledown of 615 through the return from Piglet and the Uncasing of Libration$_1$, 622.
Finally, dammit, a book! LastQuest Piglet takes up the whole thing. A unity, by heaven, leavened by the salacious interlude at SNUIΛΦ! Everything fits together, even the Fourth Divorce. But how can one keep the audience from ΘUN through CI?

Part V, ΩΛX / **Out**, runs from Eniaca's Mad Dash of Winter$_2$, 622, through 625, to DSP's departure on the first day of XVI/1.
And again, this one should work. Start with the War Between the Sexes, then segue into the forecasts of the end, and then to the end itself—the Battle of Turnaround. Everything is subordinate to that. Even the troubles with Eniaca have their place in the Grand Design.

PLUS:

Part VI, ᵭUΘ / **Beyond**, includes Appendices, Indices, Unclassificable Materials, and the like—including, probably,the varicolored MischMosches over the years—the raw materials, so to speak, of the preceeding five volumes.
No real problem with this, since there's no story to pace. Pure systematization, with digression justified by calling them Appendices. Your P&G's sort of thing.

Same Night: Time of the Great Unlinking (HT 36.3)
Fall$_1$: DSP enrolls in 5-year course in WorldBuilding at Arkhiv
574: [19] First Winter Term (HT 8)
575: [20]
576: [21] On Winter Vacation (HT 10) DSP unwittingly involved in Quinquest to West Eniaca dies$_1$ at Port Farie
577: [22] Honeymoon in Clus [= VELXES #1] (HT 7, HT 37.4)
578: [23] DSP sues for degree; Awarded Diploma in WorldBuilding, Arkhiv
Conversation with Eniaca (HT 4.1); Dødat born
579: [24]
580: [25] Battle of **Trolltrial**: Order of Seleital, 2nd Class (HT 23)
Grand Celebratory Banquet for Victor (HT 37.1)
Public Trial: DSP's *First Public* DISGRACE
Eniaca writes Munista pamphlet (HT 24.4)
Monca born
DSP's first cosmogony firm, Worlds to Order, fails
581: [26] Divorce I
DSP marries & divorces Minni-Manni-Munni-Meeni-Mooni
582: [27] DSP in Middle Orders of Civil Service: StyMaster (HT 8; HT 2);
recruited as Spy; infiltrates AVIZLA HUÇUR at Mt. Punctilious, but report, delivered through wrong chute, gathers dust for 6 years (HT 33)
Kobold unrest goes unnoted
583: [28] DSP takes cover job as sub-sublibrarian in Arkhiv (HT 11; HT 36.2)
AVIZLA HUÇUR & Breakout (HT 22.4)
Rallying graffito on Cave Wall (HT 4.2)
Due to faulty intelligence reports, GiantWaterSlide, ostensibly recreational, constructed at ruinous expense by The Powers That Be in very worst section of Port Farie dockside (HT 33)
Battle of **Wormless**. Noted [later and falsely] by Royal Revisionists as taking place in Reference Room at Arkhiv, Winter$_2$ (HT 36.2)
DSP receives first Medal of Honor (HT 11)
584: [29] DSP's *Second Public* DISGRACE: Stripped of first Medal of Honor

ZAL
Around

585: [30] DSP recruited again as spy
Enna Tour/Dromenon declared success (HT 26; HT 6)
Winter Palace closed, ostensibly for repairs; creation of *The Bungled Labyrinth* (HT 33)
DSP sets up Worlds in Collusion, second cosmogony firm in Clus; very posh, but funding undisclosed
TPTB reverse current of River Dekhst (HT 33)
586: [31] DSP freelance counterintelligence specialist in purlieus of Clus (HT 33);
Time of Erotic Misadventures, and recounted in "The Highly Secret History"
has a Day in the Life, Wint$_2$ (HT 54; HT 55A; HT 56)
TPTB make current of River Dekhst run sideways (HT 33); yet another flooding of Vçen
587: [32] Hyperextended Orgy within the precincts at Clus
DSP's *Third Public* DISGRACE
Funding withdrawn from Worlds in Collusion, which fails
Marriage II to Eniaca; VELXES #2 at Vainvale (HT 37.4)
TPTB restore original current of River Dekhst

588: [33] Sum_2: *First Theatre Tour:*

Shamblesplay becomes shambles at General Bountification, Art Exhibit, & Communal Slosh near Vçen; Enna riot; jail (HT 25)

589: [34]

590: [35] Dødat, 12, at Camp Nitgedaiget (HT 27.4)

591: [36]

592: [37] Monca, 12, Runs Knife at Clus (HT 27.4)

593: [38] from sometime before WoeDay 593 until...

594: [39] ...WoeDay, 594: DSP held in durance sleazy in QuestLost Castle, wherever that is (HT 57, HT 59)

595: [40] *"Food War"*(HT 24.3):

Failure of Farfel Crop
Eucharistic Schism, North against South
ᴅsp drafted as Flasher, Second Class
Horrid Sausaging in the [Deadly] Dale

596: [41]

597: [42] ᴅsp employed as lobby-sweeper in Capitol at Clus (HT 42.5)

$Fall_2$: DSP publishes disgusting volume of versified architectural criticism, *Visions of Heramve* (HT 42.5)

598: [43] Sum_2: ᴅsp gives drama lecture, Men's Inst, Clus (HT 25)

599: [44] Sum_2: *Second Theatre Tour* (HT 48; HT 60)

Mauve Wyvern Mime Troupe & Domestic Plumbing Contraction Firm puts on DSP's lubricious Wallowplay *Grease Trap* at Quinquennial Transmittal Liturgy & Communal Mock at Brummagem, on the Esplanade (HT 48, HT 60; HT 65; HT 66); the Brummagem Benison [or Idyll]; DSP loses address book (HT 19)

600: [45] Divorce II (HT 32.1)

601: [46] ᴅsp works toward Magus-diploma at the City of the Magus and at Mog

602: [47] ᴅsp's thesis rejected; highly unsuccessful stint as freelance magus (HT 37.2)

VeLχeS #3 at the Bowre (HT 37.4)

Eniaca $dies_3$ in the Sale at Mog (HT 36.3; HT 62; HT 63)

603: [48] $Fall_2$: Pentapoly craze throughout High Thefarie (HT 17; HT 27.6)

604: [49] ᴅsp enters Ministry of Structure as copyist

605: [50] 3-yr building boom begins (HT 32.2)

Lonespire and the Möbium erected at public expense (HT 36.4)

Last Dromenon

606: [51]

607: [52] The Utterly Misbegotten Concert on the Islet, early $Summer_2$ (HT 34)

Sudden ascension of Wily Islet [i.e, *Tlusc*] from Lake Ruin (HT 34)

608: [53]

609: [54] $Spring_1$: Conversion of Möbium to Refreshment/Regrouping Hostel for Confused Travellers;

ΛCΛBeLLΛΘ scandal (HT 41.2)

Awful Clambake at Seagirt leads to DSP's Decline-and-Fall-and-Deletion-from-the-Records (HT 27.4); had won 5 Principal Gamings before this

610: [55] *The Faring to the North* ends in futility

611: [56] ᴅsp forms landscape gardening firm, Viable Vistas

612: [57] ƀsp receives unexplained commission for Gardens of Barok
VELXES #4 at Heramve (HT 37.4)
The Gutting of the Hideous Hamlet of Heramve
ƀsp, aided by Cortia Genannt, outmaneuvers IRS in affair of Broslyn Oak (HT 42.2); takes unwitting tour of the Maze (HT 42.4)
613: [58] Libration2: The Ascension of the Awful Cooks (The SchmierkäseStaircase) seizes the public's attention for 25 days
614: [59] Spring1: Gardens of Barok open; Establishment immobilized (HT 31)
ƀsp's *Fourth Public* DISGRACE
Libration1: DSP lasts one day as *Sutrela* (dragon-sexer); in recovery at Rosehaven until Fall2 (HT 39)
Rift in the Succession:
Snollygosters at Horizon Ledge (HT 31)
Repulse of Snollygosters by (Morris) Leftwich's Leap
ƀsp's late arrival at battle of **Horizon**
Concord of Lake Seemly

ÇA
Over

615: [60] Early Winter1: ƀsp to Marzipan House and penultimate career as resident storyteller (HT 28)
Or so he says...but the facts speak otherwise (HT 44)
616: [61]Summer2, Tummling: The Closeted Cabal and the Spiral Scratch (HT 46.6)
WowDay, Libration2, Tummling: Offset on the Northfaring
617: [62] Spring1: The Sluggish Outfare I: The Slothhouse Dawdle at Cer-by-the-Sea (HT 46.3)
Summer1: The Sluggish Outfare II: Tea and Such at the Bowre
Winter1: The Sluggish Outfare III: The Concertina Longueur induces Rockquiem (HT 46.4)
Woe Day, Libration1: Outfare Proper I: The Crossover to Unmap
Summer2: Outfare Proper II: The TransKobold Kaper
WowDay, Libration2: Outfare Proper III: To The Lands Beyond the Wind
618: [63] Spring1: Uppile I Begins: The Vortex
Futile Harangue when Council ["Nellies"] meets on the Ropewalk in Clus
Summer1-WowDay, Libration2: Uppile I continues, culminating in the Awful Affair of the Inverted Celebrant at the Aerie
619: [64] Spring1-Libration1: Uppile II commences and continues on to the Wyrmhole
WoeDay, Libration1: Back in High Thefarie, Nellies at Enphurli declare the government bankrupt beyond all repair (HT 42.2); austerity instituted
WoeDay, Libration1: Uppile II peaks in the Descent to the Depths
Spring2-Libration2: Uppile III: The Mousing Beneath
WowDay, Libration2: Crosssoul at The Abyss; Half-Heard Harangue of the Goshawful Gargle
620: [65][All year] Backwend I: The Difficult Ascent
WoeDay, Libration1: In High Thefarie, Divorce IV (HT 32.1), ƀsp sloughed in absentia, of course
WowDay, Libration2: Backwend II: Light at the end of the Tunnel
621: [66]Spring1-Spring2: Backwend III: The Long Way Around: At some point ƀsp spends a fiftnight in SNUIAΦ (HT 46.5)...but the specific chronology of Backwend remains highly uncertain
WoeDay, Libration1: Back in High Thefarie, The Great Devaluation [Credit Berating] deliberately fostered & fomented by Nellies; internecine war between Rich & Poor (HT 46.6)
Summer2: Backwend IV: Over the Edge

2 pents before WowDay, Libration$_2$: Devaluation peaks in the Terrible Takeover Battle at the Temple of Tin; none are left solvent (HT 46.2)
WowDay, Libration$_2$: Backwend V: Tummling: The Disguised Return
622: [67] WoeDay, Libration$_1$: Backwend VI: Tummling: The Uncasing

ᙢᚲᚷ
Out

622: [67] Winter$_2$: *Eniaca's Mad Dash* from Winter Palace to Tummling (HT 27.2)
Winter$_2$: War between the Sexes (HT 27.3; HT 28)
Battle of the Bowre
623: [68] Spring$_1$: ᚦᚱᚹ incarcerated for 25 days beneath waves at Ywis (HT 42.3)
Profusion of Images (HT 16); Concord of Lake Seemly broken
ᚦᚱᚹ impressed as apprentice plumber by Brotherhood of Moï at Bolsena
Draining of Lake Ruin: 5 classes of student priests at Bolsena thus corrupted
Regular SesquiQuinquennial Sale at Curious City of Mog (HT 36.3)
624: [69] Sum$_1$: Bolsena WordRiots set off Class Struggle (HT 42.6)
Wyvern Spell employed at battle of **Quincunx** (HT 18; HT 13)
Early eruption of Mt. Punctilious
ᚦᚱᚹ's *Fifth Public* **DISGRACE**
Marriage V to Eniaca
625: [70] Divorce V
Eniaca writes ᚹᚢᚳᚢᙢᚷᚹᚲ (HT 24.5), dies 5
Marriage VI [!!]
WoeDay, Lib$_1$: Verbal Summit at Vei crashes in confusion and vituperation;
Class Struggle continues (HT 42.6)
The Dead Awaken
Battle of **Turnaround:**
Cyclend/Cyclarch, Roundoff/Roundon
High Note (HT 21)
XVI 1: [70] As year begins, ᚦᚱᚹ disappears [transported suddenly to RW at 17 May 1979, aged 52 years minus 10 days]

PreDSP Events in the Literature

Proto-I: The Mythical Beginning: **Budodon** & **Leinθ** (HT 12)
Proto-I: The Creation of Our Country: **Culçanç** and **Tarxl** (HT 36.3)
XIV 623-625: Ed the Cyclist (HT 32.5)
XV 1 or thereabouts: R. Merci runs backwards, flooding Bolsena, which is re-founded by Arch-Patriarch Moï (HT 14)
XV 512: Audience massacred, hills beyond Vei, Shamblesplay (HT 25)
XV 515: Theatrical Laws (HT 25)
XV 555: Surgical innovation: Opening of Chest Cavity (HT 32.6)

Herewith the Comment of The Management [Version 2.2]

This is, of course, as its title says, tentative in the highest degree, possessed of shocking holes and distressful ambiguities. It does not even *pretend* to completeness: where, the experienced student might ask, is any mention to be found of Ascension of the Awful Cooks (vulgarly known as *The Schmierkäse Staircase*), that 25-days wonder that so enlivened Libration$_2$, 613? To this and similar questions, We, Management, can only reply, admittedly lamely, that most items lacking the confirmation of double citation in the midden of DSP's Thefarien remains have, for the moment, been excluded in the interests of Truth. It is to be hoped that new material will be brought to light and supply that remarkable period of a remarkable land with a surer definition, which We shall promptly update in versions 2.3 [*sic*] and beyond. Which should be enough to be getting on with. Do, however, be sure to Watch This Space.

/s/ The Management

Herewith the Reply of dsp to the above [Version 3.01]

Withal, a sad chapter. But things are looking up. And do Watch This Space. More to come.

/s/ dsp

Logo of the Thermoduct Captivity,
now trashed

High Thefarie

SIDLING INTO THE COUNTRY

or

THE UNCERTAINTY PRINCIPLES

The first-time RW visitor to High Thefarie should be prepared for some unease in navigation.

Oh, the Map is there, in whatever version. Tipped in, reduced, handed out—The Map is certainly *there*. And it looks, basically, like other maps. A plane surface, with regularized scratches on it that somehow signify space and place, show (if nothing else) *relations* between what we have agreed to regard as locales. "Go West for 50 miles," we say, "and you will—within the standard parameters of error—fetch up at your destination." Simple. Nothing to it.

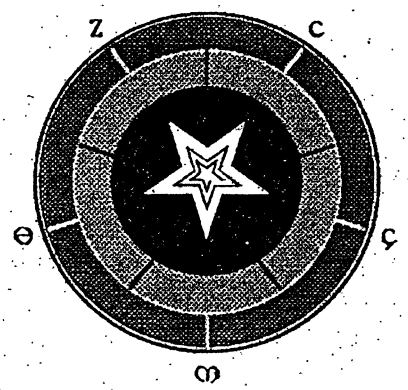
Until the tyro realizes that there are two deep difficulties. The first is

QUINTASININITY

—which is to say, the Lack of Direction.

There are no directional indications on the Map. The presumption is that *up* is *North*, of course, but is that the case? After all, High Thefarie is supposed to be *other*, and its *otherness* might, just might, extend to directions as well. Maybe *North* is *down* here, or maybe we have something like the medieval European O/T maps, where *East* is on top, or. . . .

It's worse than that. There were *five* directions in High Thefarie, and the standard Compass Rose might look, or have looked, something like this:



It may look fairly simple. Just convert. There may be a few problems in indicating directions 72° apart, rather than 90°, but really, it's all just arithmetic, isn't it? Unfortunately, no. The Map has been conceived in a mind that works in shifts of 90°, and constructed on a computer that is subject to the same figuration. The Map is therefore inaccurate from the start, and ðsp, with all his vaunted might at *anamnêsis*, or *recollection*, has no way to rectify the matter. For all his half-century there, he would have to become a Thefarien again figure it out. But then he wouldn't be a RealWorlder any more, and would have no possible idea of how to represent this on a four-directional Map, if he could conceive of such a thing.

High Thefarie 1

What it comes down to is that, when you follow the events in ΘEFARIEN MATERIALS, any direction you take will be wrong. Sometimes slightly, sometimes grossly, but always *wrong*.

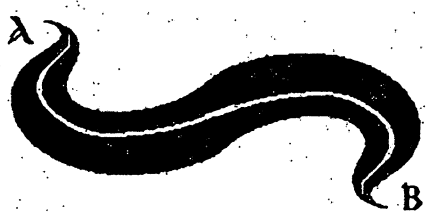
But that's not all. There is another difficulty, mapwise, known as

HIA | TUS

—which is to say, the Lack of Distance.

As the beginner at HT cartography will have noticed by this time, The Map does not show any *roads*. High Thefarie is not a wilderness, but it is The Map is certainly trackless. There are no lines, spidery or otherwise, any one of the many locales of any other—except for Rivers, which were just about unnavigable, and hence don't count, and are represented badly anyway. To reiterate: There are no roads, paths, turnpikes, caminos, no *ways* , though the MATERIALS clearly imply them, and on occasion even mention them. But The Map shows merely blank space.

There is a reason for this. Consider going by road in the RealWorld. No Problem at all. Start at A—or, this being High Thefarie, λ —proceed on the provided way doggedly enough for the prescribed distance, and eventually you arrive at B, thus:



But in High Thefarie, no distances are provided, for the very good reason that the Thefariens themselves were unsure as to how far it was from any place to another.[1] They possessed a unit of measurement, the ZILAC, but the number of ZILACAL that separated λ from B, varied daily. To quote from the Long Questions promulgated in 1985: "...the considerable journey from Mog to Tin's Temple might be reckoned at 107 ZILACAL one day and 213 the next." Travel thus became difficult, so:

There did exist a method—inconvenient, not to say laborious, but often effective—for solving this, and hence Going Places, but again δsp's memory fails us. He has no inkling of the principle involved, or how in the world—the Otherworld, rather—a journey became a practical option.

What it comes down to is this is that the new voyager in High Thefarie is considerably worse off than the observer of subatomic particles. The Heisenbergian can posit direction or speed, but not both. The neoThefarien can figure *neither* direction *nor* distance, which makes The Map only a little better than absolutely useless.

In time, δsp may remember the solutions to one or the other of these enigmas, or even both. Stranger things have happened. But, until then, well, there are problems.

It seemed only sporting to let you know.

TURCE MURILA,
Douglass Parker
20 December 1993

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[1] Well, not *any*. Short distances—rooms, towns, battlefields—were measureable and hence transitable. But any destination further away than an interval which might have been ten miles, or might *not*, were subject to the restrictions above.

MASTER OF THE INNER STY

I slopped the Prince on Threeday

The prime cachet of worth,
Of privilege and prestige
So recently reached.

Thinking
On my new five wives and back-hooked
Scimitar, I kept my gorge
In order, and set the paten
Of mulse, and pulse, and spelt
Beneath the flattened nose
Of loftiness, His Lowness

pure

Whose snorts and snuffles
Transported me.

i ve saved
the bib
and shovel

From the poems of Dionysius Simplicissimus Periphrastes, about whom much more later

VESTIBULE

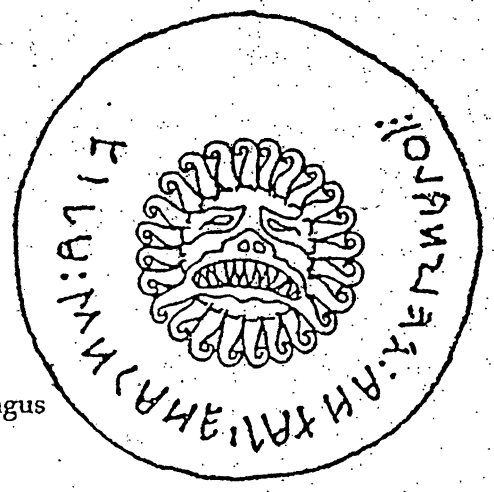
came fiveday the wind rose
scoring the sun's rays
scarring the moon's rise
scattring the main's ruse

and Scudding in circles, my boarskin coracle
Slipped from the insignificant source,
Between alluvial banks, atop
The rabidly rolling rapids. . . skipped
Sur les pointes above the delta's
Silt, and, insulting a pod of seals,
Shipped a hogshead of tepid salinity
As it sped and spiralled hard alee
Of an oddly potted olive tree. . . .

come fiveday charybdis sucks
the moil of the maelstrom soaks
the well of the whirlpool sinks
absorbing race creed sex

and down
adown
adown
down
i was never
a sailor
any
way

MEDAL OF HONOR[1]



VIPA	moral chutzpah
LUNCANE	with-[the-]elbow
PATNA	in-mild-superfluity
VELSNALOI	makes-[the-]mighty-magus

From the poems of Dionysius Simplicissimus Periphrastes [don't worry; we'll get to him eventually]

[1]Another possible translation: "CONVENTION BADGE"

CONVERSATION WITH ENIACA

I thought you were viviparous.
You don't
know everything, messire.
Evidently not....
Seems nice.
Oh, no. Don't give it back.
Why not?
Biology. You're The Sire, messire.
I see.
And what do I do with this?
You keep it
Where?
Between your thighs.
My thighs?
You keep it safe
and warm. Until.
How long is that?
Your Choice.
A girl, six months. Or ten for a boy.
So. Which
is better?
A lot to be said on both sides.
Please do.
Well, looked at strictly statistically, a girl
has a better chance of getting through The Fire;
something to do with genes. And then, there's the matter
of education: she costs more, but has to repay it.
On clothes, they're even. The hair, that's strictly a boy's
concern, of course.
Of course.
The greatest bother
with boys is The Tour, at twelve. No girls can make
The Tour, but all boys have to. A source of distress
to the parents. All that performing, down in The Fens.
They say the rewards are greater.
Rewards for the boys?
For the parents. I wouldn't know. But only girls
can Run The Knife at Clus. It balances out.

From the poems of Dionysius Simplicissimus Periphrastes, about whom. . . .

To generalize: A girl has Place, if she wants it;
a boy has pressure, whether he wants it or not.
But you're to decide. I'm merely The Mem.

Can I have

some time?

You might as well give it total attention
for, oh, six months. You're not going out. Until.
And now....

But aren't you staying?

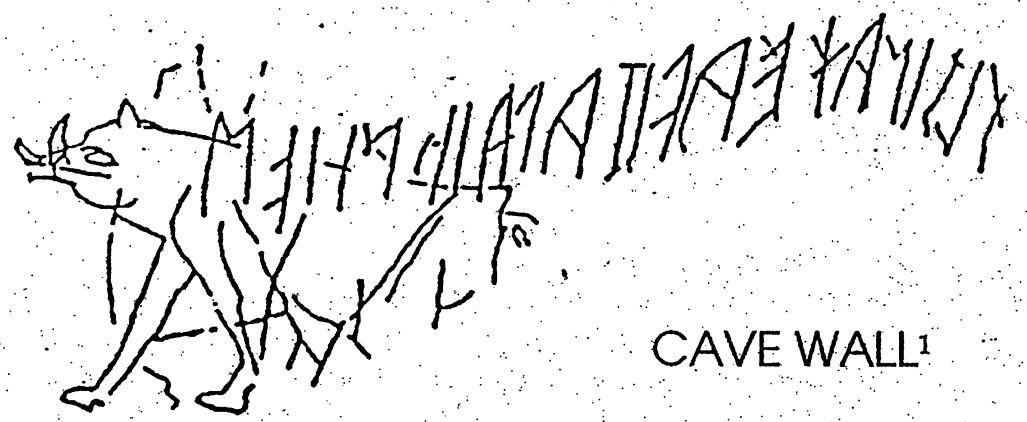
Simply unheard-of.
Besides, there's The Knife, and the Viscri-Orgy.

But look,

it's yours, too.

No, not now; it's yours. Until.
I really have to run, but I do remember
one thing men say about The Choice: No girl
will ever have to go through *this*. Get comfy
and think, and I'll check back. Goodbye.

Goodbye.



CAVE WALL[1]

CLTI:	[though] trapped
NAXE:	in-the-rock
AVIZA:	[the] boar
APAINIIES:	has-does-and-will-ever-emerge

[1]Writing goes from left to right in this reproduced graffito, presumably related to the cult of AVIZLA HUÇUR, "The Sons of the Boar." Beside this item in *The Notebook* (f. 17r.) is a cryptic scribbling in pencil, here transcribed tentatively:

¿FQ 3/6/48? Presumably a date.

OPEN LETTER

O Best Beloved:

I trust you have now got the idea: You are to be inflicted with well-nigh interminable effusions of dee ess pea, an academic of high middle age [*not* ages], who suddenly, at 9:32 a.m. CDST, 17 May 1979, found himself transported to the land of High Thefarie, a very other otherworld, where, reconstituted ten days short of his eighteenth birthday, he lived a highly varied existence for fifty-two years and ten days, until his harsh, untimely retransport to Here-and-Now. [This last event, if cruel, was hardly tragic; he had messed things up rather thoroughly, but still.] To Here-and-Now, where much less time had passed than in There-and-Then; scarcely any, in fact. A standard gimmick, I admit. . . but High Thefarie was, or is, no standard otherworld.

Your trouble is that Periphrastes toiled away with the mind of a poet and the soul of a reference librarian, a combination that pretty well vitiates any success in either occupation. Strain as he might towards System, he never had a chance. The result is that he coverage of High Thefarie was, and is, and will be, spotty--or, as he preferred to term it, *pointillistic*. The dedicated student of the place [their number reaches to more than seven hundred, but most have given it up], will find that he/she must do a great deal of the work her/himself, filling in DSP's lacunae, or else rest content with a series of snapshots taken, as it were, by heat lightning.

How different, I might remark, from *your* depiction of *your* world, a delineation so full and ordered, so sumptuous and systematic, that envious old Dionysius, on beholding it, might well break into wild sobs, and probably will. . . .

TURCE MURILA,

dsp

Still from the surviving remains of [all together, now!] Dionysius Simplicissimus Periphrastes

THE ENNA TOUR:
AMIS DE VOYAGE

ZAL: *Herins Lariste*

chimera's by-blow/
nasty lump between shoulders/
shape-shifter supreme/
as germ infected gorgons/
dispatched by wonder drug/

CI: *Muceti Calisna*

incurable high-liver/
breath to stop cyclones/
morbidly mephitic/
dodged strategically/
died downwind/

MAX: *Zarapiu Clante*

joker of the pack/
laugh met at back of neck/
never in terror/
guffawed at the onrush/
consumed with self/

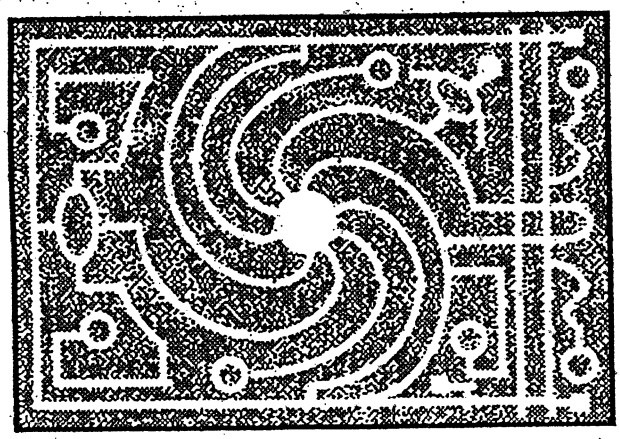
ΘUN: *Tarχi Matulna*

fed through youth by ravens/
voice to dry bone-marrow/
had by heart maχ-moχ scrolls/
shrivelled all saurians/
staked to bleach at entrance/

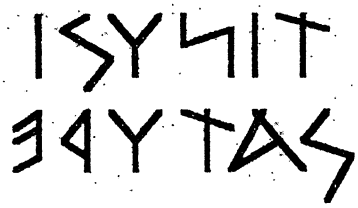
ÇA: *Nicipur Petsna*

quite equably nurtured/
perfectly spherical/
flattener of all comers/
bounded down fissure/
punctured by stalagmite/

and i m home safe
and they re no more
but then i ask
what are friends for



TURCE MURILA, Guys



Yet another thrilling selection from the Nachlass of Dionysius Simplicissimus Periphrastes

RITUAL PORN:
THE HONEYMOON IN CLUS

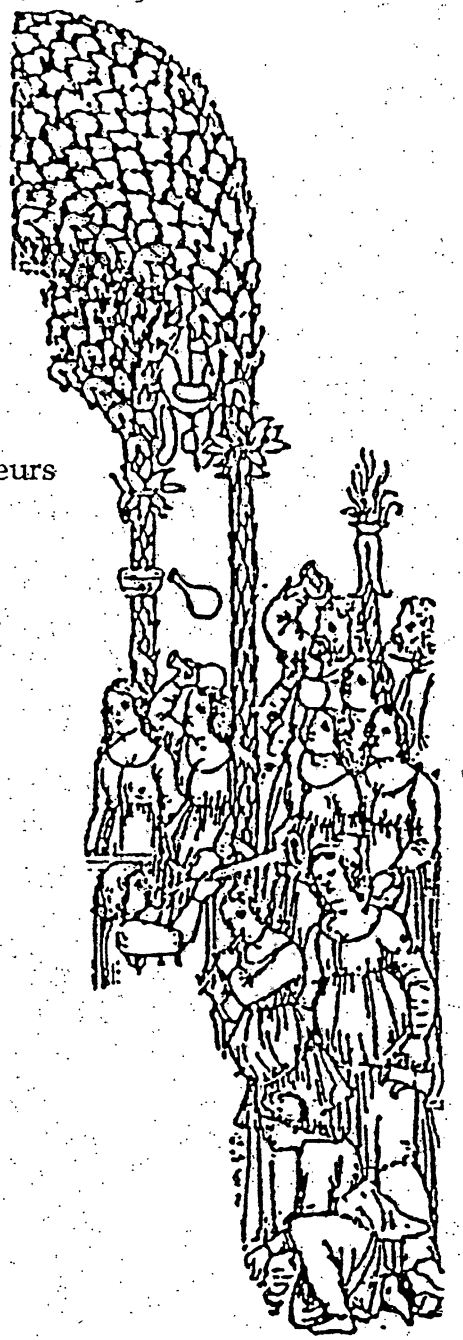
The height, the depth, and the essence
of Luvmakkynge in Yefarie, High or Low,
consists not in the Object,
but in the Environs, *viz.*:

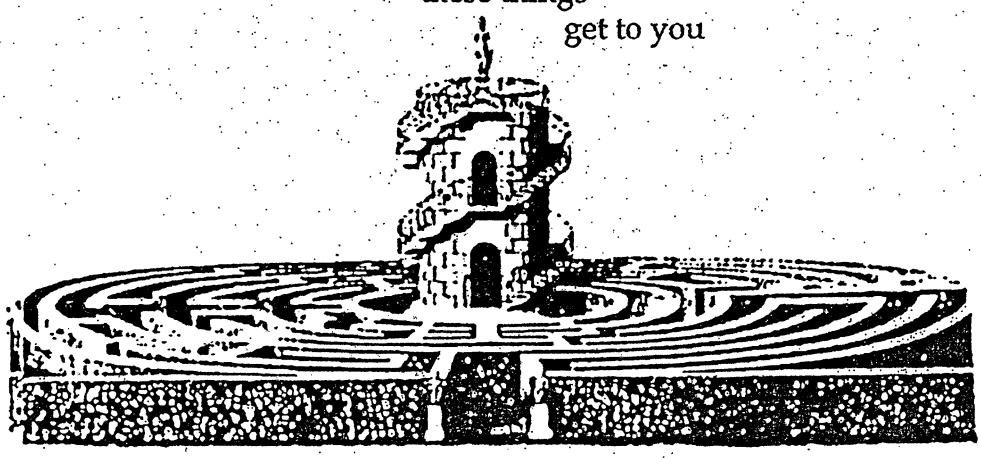
ΘUN: Fish paste on the counterpane
ZΛL: Kohl on the eyes of the 5^2 Voyeurs
CI: Friable seaweed, to smear
ÇΛ: Fog shrinking the tapestries
ΜΛX: Bells on the springs

The simple recital of these specifics
is more than enough to induce a
shuddering climax
in well-bred adult males.

[while Eniaca recumbent
so recently ravished
from cart and kin
spearslits in lobes
philtres ingested
eager and heaving
pneumatic and
unnoticed
is
par-ti-ci-pa-ted]

funny how
these things
get to you





Again, from the Reliques of ϑsp

WINTER TERM

It was a fair report, considering
that I was new in the program, and allowing
for the usual mess of ameliorative jargon:

I made a *Peak* in JUSTICE. The double-bind
exercise, with the pents of mothers and wives
flanking the lab-table, showed, in the words of the didact,
"*. . .an almost fiendish grasp of the higher reaches
of Right and Retribution. And lovely Pain.*"
I still go see the subject, on visiting days.

LEGENDS, a *Point*. I'd figured that, and, what with
WEATHER's demands, shortchanged it. I did the reading,
but fudged the Project: a basic, barebones Quest
that didn't really connect with my Restoration.
However: "*Such disregard for heuristic substrate
does not augur well for this quinquennial's
professionalism.*"
That, I thought, was unfair.

MICROCOSMOGONY: Busted my phalanges
on this. A world the like of which he'd never
seen in that course. The interrelations, trouvailles. . .
why, even the midges in The Garden picked up the Curve
of Being. And when I stretched out my hand on the Final
and peaked the proto, the whole world clicked into Life
and moved and meshed like a well-oiled dial. And what
did I get?
A *Prop*. The comment? "*Interesting Concept.*"
That's all. The bastard. I'll Interesting Concept *him*.

CHANCE is a gut, and everyone knows it's a gut,
a certain *Prop* no matter what you do.
But how he can dull the brightest material,
rough up the shine until it rubs you to sleep,
is outside of Nature itself. The Miracle unit
dragged on for a month of yawns, and Sports and Mutations
turned really exciting stuff into one long drone.
"*Good Work!*" he said. Oh, sure. He's down for CAUSE
this spring, when I have to take it. Should be a clutch.

And then there was WEATHER. *Poke-Plus,* and I was lucky:
I might have *Pick*ed. A Final has never been blown
with such unswerving finesse: "*A simple series*
of snowstorms, hanging on for a month; develop."
That was the question. Hell, I could have done it
the second week of the course. But I tried too hard,
used too much snow at the start, and when I corrected
that, the temperature dropped through the floor, and when I
attended to *that,* it iced, and then I got rattled,
watching the temperature swoop insanely up
and down, and the snow make rain make ice make mist
make snow make nothing at all. I was standing in shock,
sopped through and blue, when it ended. "*Demonstrates*
something less than adequate grasp of the aims
and skills of the course." I rather tend to agree.

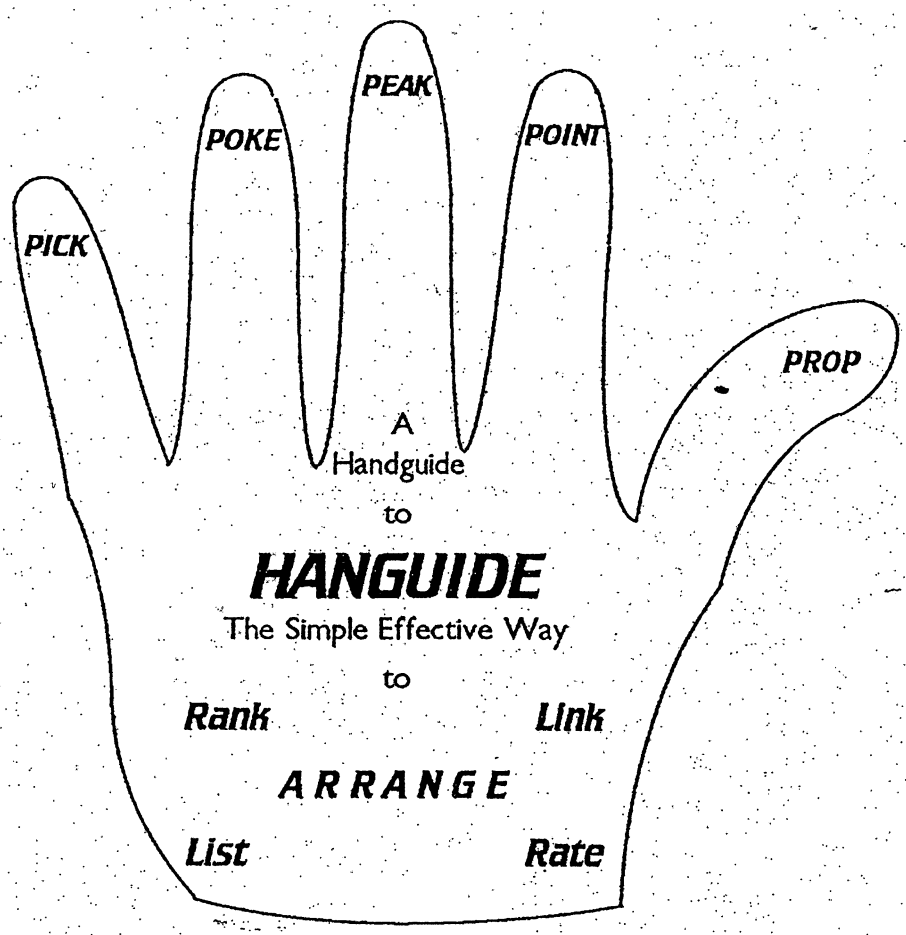
Overall, I can't complain. *Prop-Minus:* a fair
Report. But *Fair Won't Fare to Enphurli.* I'll waste
my lifespan humping humus and heaping ha-ha's,
bailiffing vistas out in the boondocks, unless
I get it together.

And learn how to handle snow.

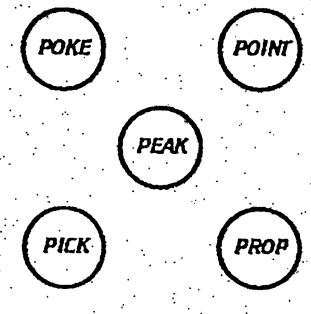
❄ ❄ ❄

HANGUIDE
to the Middle Orders of the Civil Service

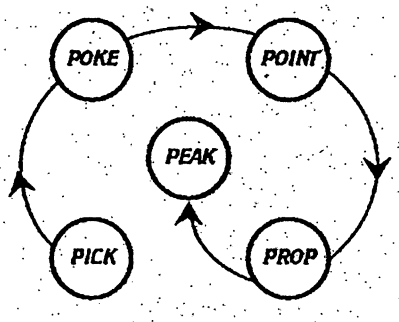
PICK:	Favored Currier
POKE:	Tail Spiraller
POINT:	Filer of the Right Front Hoof
PROP:	Changer of PURO's Straw
PEAK:	Head Dunger/Supervisor of Sanitary Engineers



1. Configuration: Hold right hand with fingertips toward you. Arrange them to form quincunx, with middle fingertip at center, thus:



2. Operation: Order incoming data, proceeding in clockwise spiral that starts at *PICK* and ends at *PEAK*, thus:



3. Evaluation: Assess in ascending order of value, merit, or worth, thus:

PICK = 1
POKE = 2
POINT = 3
PROP = 4
PEAK = 5

From ðsp's *Recurrent Desperations [4th edition]*

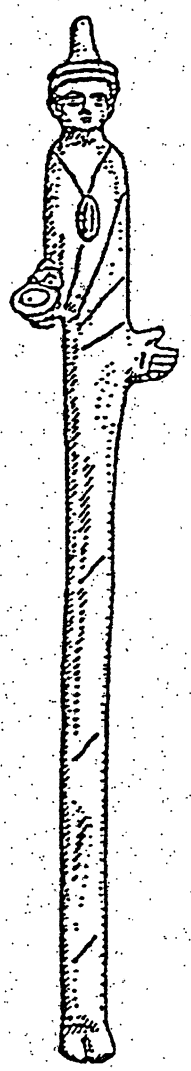
WHAT I DID ON MY WINTER VACATION

FIELD TRIP: THE BOWRE

Grass in concentric circles swirls
With rose and ivy interspersed.
Down cypress, up the celery curls.
The finch sings till his heart will burst
And punctuates the fountain's lap
Along the rocks to flood the moss.

There is no spot upon the map
To put beside this without loss.
There, centered in green, red, and white
A grotto opens to the shrine.
Played out, I stop, then follow sight
With step: New birth behind the vine.

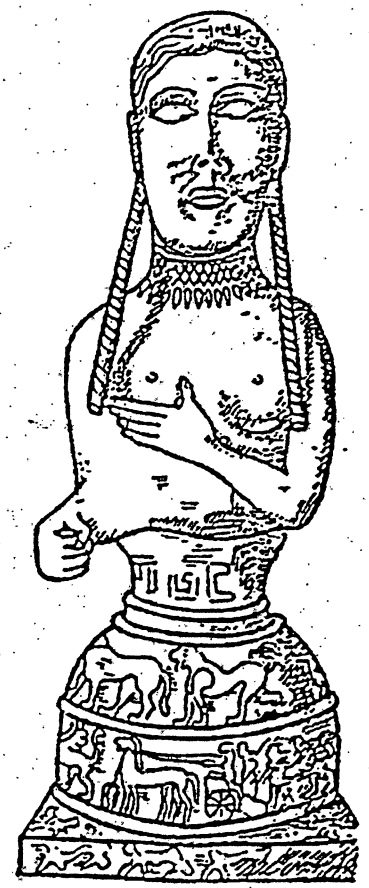
No door but growth. A cluster hangs.
I enter to the goddess' fangs.



SIDE TRIP: SEAGIRT

Suddenly lighter
I turned to the riddled body
Of the all-too-fallible seer
To secure one final direction:
Turn left or right at the cairn?
But he was suppurating
Swiftly, deliquescing
Into a saffron pool. . . .
And the thoats were clustering round.
With a freehearted sigh
I shouldered my scroll
And palmed my paddle,
Setting off South by East
For the golden cumquats,
The soporific spring,
And the ultimate penultimate shore.

Alone at last.



BAD TRIP: PORT FARIE

The screams unstrung me.
Crushing the scrip in one hand
And scratching madly with the other
I left her with the Ministers
And limped spread-legged home to pack.

From ðsp's ***Recurrent Desperations*** *[4th edition]*

THE ARCHIVAL QUINTAL SYSTEM

(selections)

040-044	*Creation:*	ABYSS to DEW
100-104	*Creation:*	DROP to MOONS
110-114	*Creation:*	MOONS to SPERM
120-134	*Creation:*	SUN to TIME
140-144	*Creation:*	TONE to ZILCH

❀ ❀ ❀

300-304	*Gods:*	ΛΙΤΛ the unseen to ΛÇΙΡΛ the avenger
310-314	*Gods:*	ΛÇΛΧ the lame to CΛΘ the sun
320-324	*Gods:*	CΙΛΕΝS the mother to CUΛÇΛNÇ the two-faced

❀ ❀ ❀

440-444	*Battles:*	GODTRUST to TROLLTRIAL
1000-1004	*Battles:*	FENDWELLERS to WORMLESS
1010-1014	*Battles:*	HORIZON to CONCERTINA
1020-1024	*Battles:*	QUINCUNX to TURNAROUND

❀ ❀ ❀

3400-3404	*Royalty:*	ARTIODACTYLA to SUIDAE
3410-3414	*Royalty:*	SUINA to SUOIDEA

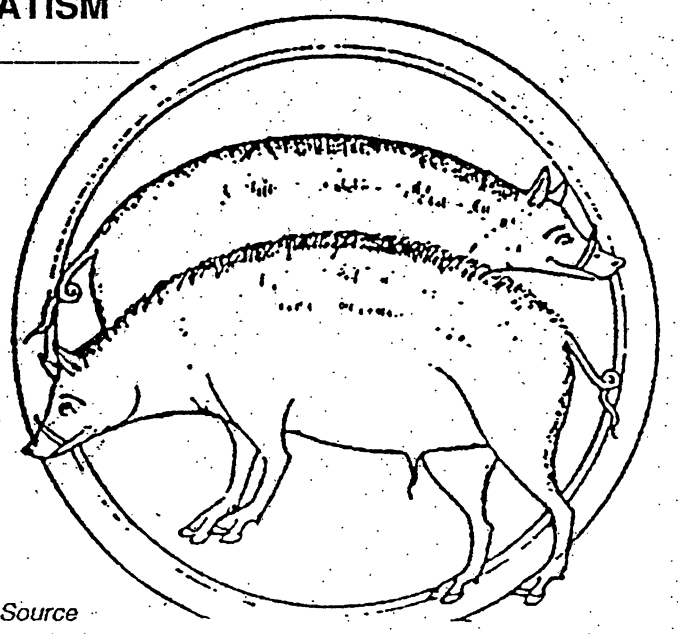
❀ ❀ ❀

DO NOT REMOVE FROM THIS CRYPT
UNDER PENALTY OF TOTAL
ECCYCLEMATISM

MEDAL OF HONOR

Larruping my library-cord
Loaded with data-rings
Like to a chain-mace,
I whipped the witless to a draw,
Until they buried me
In a Hero's Heap,
Still guarding the gate
to the Reference Room.

wotta wayta go



From the Usual Source

Granfer Tales I

BUDODON'S QUEST

When the world was five days old, Budodon the Boar awoke Outside, rolled over in the Abyss, and shook the clinging Dew off his hide.

"I am old enough to know the meaning of **"Birth, Sin, Strain, Change,** and **Death,"** said Budodon the Boar to himself.

"Besides, I am hungry."

Budodon filed his backbone, whetted his tusks, and hid his genitalia in his stomach. "One cannot be too careful," he observed.

Squinting his eyes at the Sameness-On-All-Sides, Budodon picked his way through the Abyss until he came to the Bone Bridge across the Void.

"Looks pretty rickety."

His genitalia a cold knot in his stomach, Budodon tiptoed across the Bone Bridge to the Peripheral Hinterlands, all set about with joshua-trees.

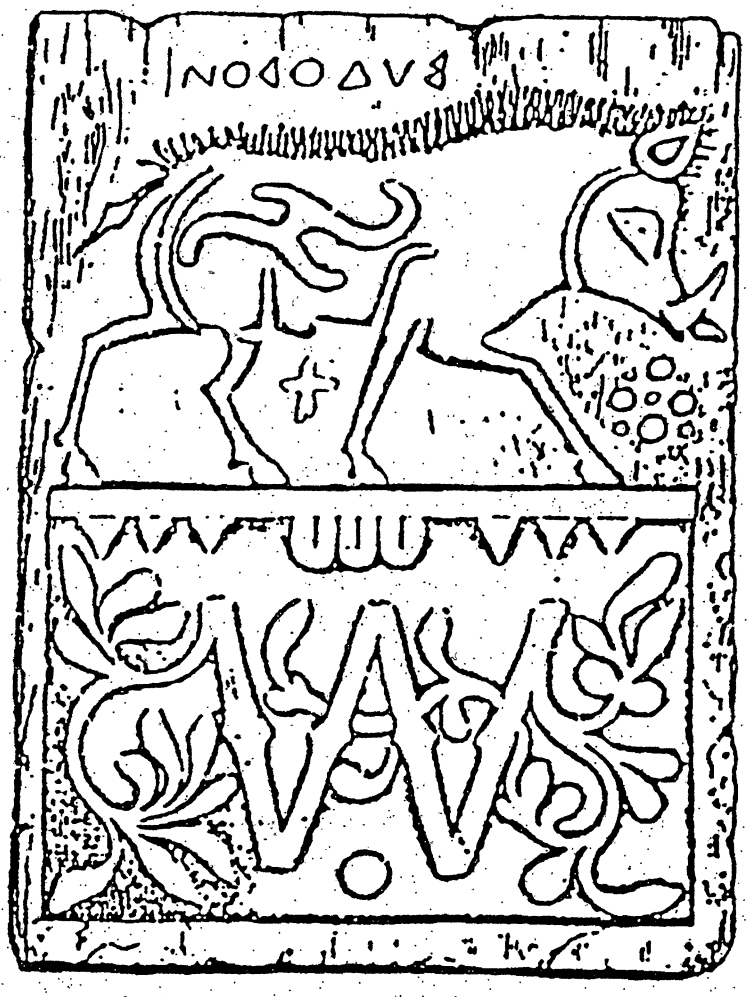
Cross-legged on a flat rock beneath a flaccid joshua-tree sat Leinθ, the Fifth Woman. She was taking large, hurried bites out of something.

Something dark, and bloody, and moving.

Budodon shuffled across to her. "Pardon me," he said, "but what is the meaning of **Birth, Sin, Strain, Change,** and **Death?"**

Leinθ swallowed hard and gnashed her fangs. "It is not polite to watch a person while that person is eating," she screamed.

"Where were you brought up?"



"Sorry,", said Budodon, and obligingly closed his eyes. In a moment, he felt a sharp pain in his groin. Leinθ's fangs were biting him, hard.

"Really!" said Budodon. He kicked out, tossed her on his tusks, and swallowed her whole. She screamed and struggled for a while, but then fell silent.

"Ask a simple question."

Budodon the Boar sighed, and set out across the
Peripheral Hinterland in search of knowledge.
He learned quite a lot about joshua-trees. . .

but nothing else, and when they ended at a sheer
rock face, he stopped in despair and confusion. Then
from his stomach came a smug rumbling:

"Left for the Gated Grove."

"Why not?" said Budodon, and turned to the left,
and suddenly was treading a grassy meadow,
soft to the trotters. The sun shone down.

The air was soft and soothing. Ahead, the
plashing of water, the singing of birds
beckoned him on. Freshness tingled his snout.

And deep in his stomach pain burst.

Budodon's brisk pace dragged to a crawl.
His stomach hammered and squeezed. He could barely
drag himself through the high, wide Gates.

The Five Springs jetted, but Budodon closed his
eyes. The trees' soft shade invited, but
Budodon fell in his tracks. Only one thing to do:

He opened his mouth and retched.

"Of all the stupid places to hide your genitalia,"
said Leinθ, the Fifth Woman. "I'm pregnant, thanks
so much. A person scarcely needs that.

"Especially since the fruit of this union is fated
to muddy the nature of things, to sabotage system,
to ruin five days of absolute perfection.

"But, in reply to your question:

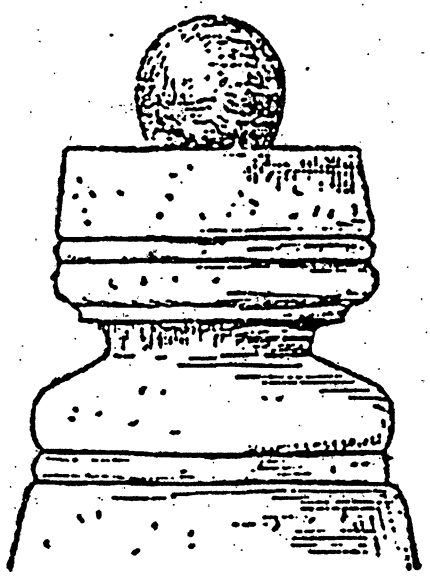
"**Birth** is the same as **Death**: They bound it all.
And **Sin** is the same as **Change**: They give it a middle.
And each and all of them are **Strain**. You'll see.

"So here. . . ." With a single motion she reached and produced a small and sullen sphere, tossing it into the grass at Budodon's feet. "Look after this."

With a shake and a swirl, she was gone.

The Gates clanged firmly shut.

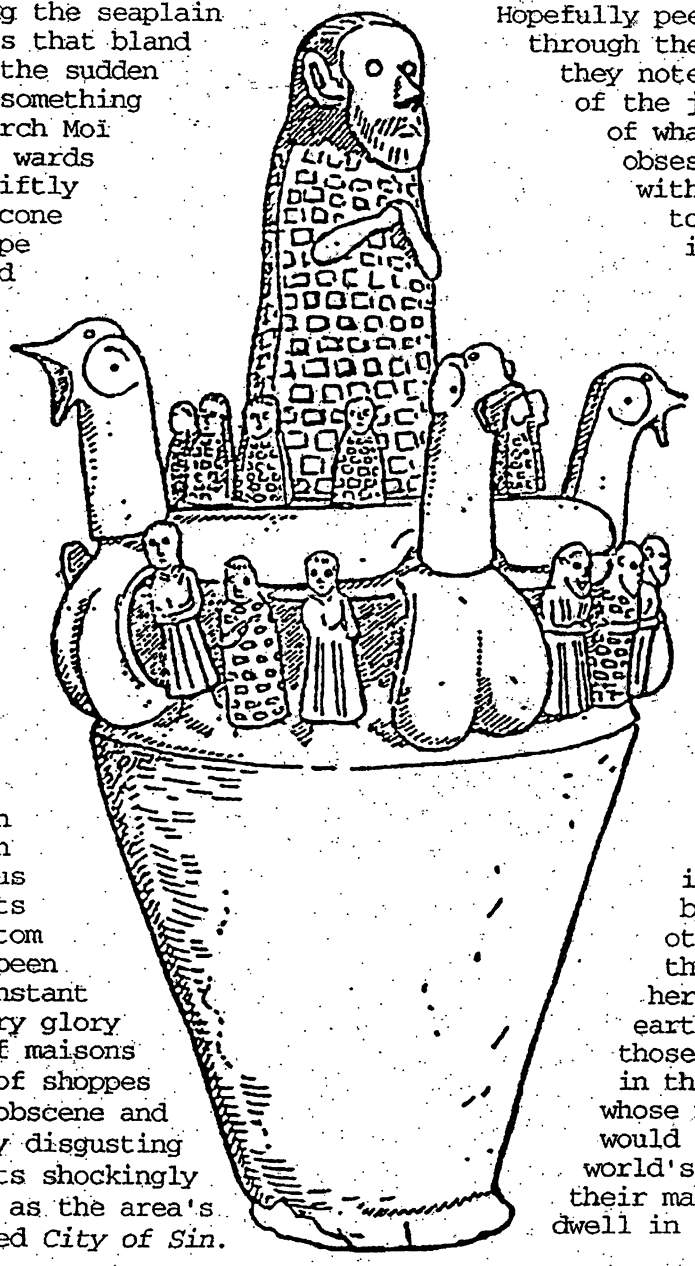
Budodon the Boar was still hungry.



Granfer Tales IX

Après le déluge, Moï

Anxiously scanning the seaplain praying to witness that bland surface split by the sudden extrusion of any something lofty Arch-Patriarch Moï and his moody wee wards on their oh so swiftly spinning blunted cone with the four agape figureheads poised stiffly atop what might be corners approached what would yet have been the down town business and religion district for Bolsena East if the water swooping back the course of the usually so dreamily tired River Merci had managed somehow not to burst the Lake into a livid dykesquashing ruin spreading blowfish sloopfragments plus distressing amounts of former lakebottom through what had been until that very instant serene in its sorry glory given its ranks of maisons de joi its files of shoppes both curious and obscene and its clumps of very disgusting games befitting its shockingly annihilated honor as the area's wholly unparalleled *City of Sin.*



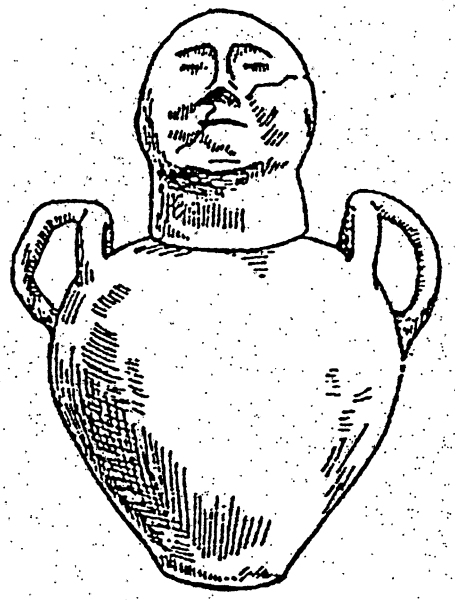
Hopefully peering straight down through the crystalline water they noted the fresh nature of the justmade remainders of what had been such an obsessively grungy spot with its stews sponged to a startling white its sticky enclaves purged to a pearly pinkish and every scummy labyrinth scrubbed by the cataclysm till its glistening illumined its structure and pointed out a clear path to incandescence signalizing by the clarity of its inobscurity a new beginning more than enough to justify these drastic deletions massive and messy of worthless lives as part of a quite imponderable design by some divinity or other to manifest in this former swamp of heretic indulgence an earthly equivalence to those shining precincts in the empyrean heights whose near approximation would certainly prod the world's depraved to shuck their many maculations and dwell in the *City of Right.*

" Looks like a fair enough place," said Moï. **" AMEN."**
" Build a right nice complex there," said Moï. **" AMEN."**
" Water has to go down first," said Moï. **" AMEN."**

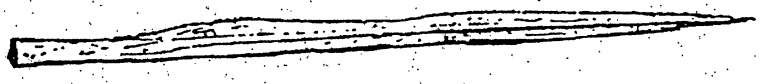
They had to wait twenty-five days.
On the nineteenth day, they caught
a pimp who'd been trapped
in an airpocket.
Moï fed him to the figureheads.
Otherwise, it was dull.

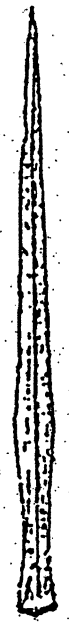
ON GRANFER'S CASE

[cinquains]



See him
serene among
bright relics, glazed, composed,
containing himself. Watch until
he cracks.



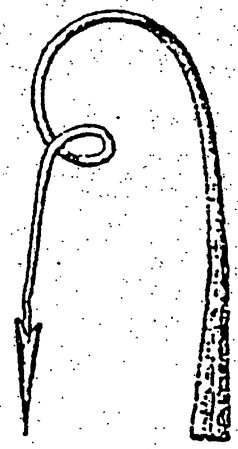


WORMLESS

Rising
technique confirmed
my part in victory.
Sans fidget or warp, all forces
combined.

HORIZON

Season,
oh ripe hoplite,
in disgust. Never slack.
Grant the mangiest host your last
best thrust.



TURNAROUND

And oops.
So must to all.
Set, doubled, redoubled,
collapsed in setting sun to face
myself.

QUINCUNX

Zenith.
Peak of the world.
Pressed endlessly bendless
before, behind, bestride, betop.
Beyond.

TROLLTRIAL

Dawn broke.
I sputtered in
the breach, but withstood that
first mad onslaught, managed to hold
my own.

EPIPHANIC MONOSTICHS

Overheard at Horizon Ledge:
"My mother loathed using the telescope here."

A Guide at Cer-by-the-Sea:
"The tourist trade slacks off a bit during invasions."

Signpost at the Deadly Dale:
NEW CREATION BUDDING / PLEASE DANCE WITH CARE

Pury's Interpreter Off Guard:
"I edit a bit, of course. He's weak on negatives."

Retired Hoplite at Perúç:
"Don't go in over the horns: They fly away."

Eniaca Angry:
"May you fold and twist and meet your antitype!"

Eniaca Testy:
"If you were a real man, you wouldn't fidget."

Eniaca Randy:
"CλΘ knows I'm willing, sailor."

Standard Duel Challenge [excerpt]:
"...& mocke sans cesse, till y^t^ thou breake ye patterne...."

An Unsatisfied Client:
"It's pretty enough, I guess, but why all the Free Will?"

An Underkeeper of the Archival Plunge:
"Remember, the wet point turns the page."

A Functionary at Vei:
"When the dead awaken, our principal problem is seepage."

An Itinerant Marriage Cancellor:
"Never, but *never*, sit under a *seleital* afterwards."

From the Annual Supplement to The Handbook to Hell:
"Upkeep, granted, continues to be an enigma. . . ."

From ***Glory Hole: The Notebooks of*** δsp

From

THE APOCALYPSE OF TARXI

25 NOW a great sign appeared in the North, as of two serpents twined in an endless struggle. 2. And the one *was* red, even to the tip of *its* tail, and on *its* three heads it wore five crowns. 3. And it cried aloud in a great voice, *Khairokharon,* which *is* to say, *Open the gates and strew the rushes on the path, for lo, the Cyclist cometh, and waxeth exceeding wroth that ye have not kept His parameters.* 4. And the other *serpent was* blotchy-green, save for the tip of *its* tail, 5. which *was* royal ecru, 6. and *it was* footed like unto a libbard, 7. and on *its* four heads it wore one crown and an half. 8. And it cried aloud in a tiny voice, *Aussecours, Aussecours,* 9. which *is* to say, *A horrible mistake has been made.* 10. And the two serpents did twist and twine, and strive that they *might* swallow each the other. 11. And the fury of *their* struggles did blot out a moon. 12. And a great sign appeared in the East, as of a hammer of adamant, 13. and *its* handle *was* of tin and of *Tin,* 14. and it did beat the earth and everything on it into garbled glebes. 15. And on it was scribed in letters of jasper, *Schporcl nu schva radion,* 16. which *is* to say, *Who hath ever promised that it would be easy?* 16. And a great sign appeared in the South, as of two mirrors, *one in a* frame of gilt, and *one in a* frame of deal. 17. And *these* did endlessly reflect each the other, emptiness of all emptinesses, world without end. 18. And the one is called, *Love,* which *is* to say, *Bagatelle,* 19. and the other is called, *Hate,* which *is* to say, *Entelechy.* 20. And a great sign appeared in the West, as of five crabs scuttling and wagging *their* great claws. 21. And *they were* of obsidian, with chased gold borders, and *their* claws were of silk. 22. And each did bear a letter, and *they* did scuttle in formation, 23. so that *they* did spell out *Klimt,* 24. which is to say, *Nothing in particular.* 25. And a great sign appeared in the North-West, as of a winged seraph, *bearing* an ewer and a spoon. 26. And a great sign appeared in the North-East, as of a ring of brass, *and it was* studded with diamonds *the size of* pumpkins. 27. And a great sign appeared in the South-East, as of an isosceles triangle of orichalc, 28. and *its* legs were equal *in length* each to the other, and to everything else that is. 29. And a great sign appeared in the South-West, as of an ark, *or* chest, of chased gypsum. 30. And out of it did project the head of a man, and *his* hair *was* red, 31. and he did ceaselessly cry, *Deefahns, Deefahns,* 32. which *is* to say, *The Book stoppeth here.* 33. And a great sign appeared in the North-North-West, as of a grommet of glass. 34. And a great sign appeared in the North-North-East, as of a dead wheatsheaf ravaged by blue blight. 35. And great sign appeared in the South-South-West,

VESTLIST[1] for

PENTAPOLY

PERUÇ

Porkpie
Loafers
Sweatsox
Cutoffs
Pullover
Bellyband
Mittens
Feedbag
Hoe
❀ 138/0

CLUS

Fez
Wedgies
Spats
Scanties
Halter
Choker
Muff
Overnighter
Ticklestick
❀ 307/4

ENPHURLI

Busby
Jackboots
Gaiters
Jodhpurs
Cutaway
Stock
Kids
Briefbag
Crop
❀ 285/0

BOLSENA

Aura
Calces
Kneepads
Pudicure
Alb
Rope
Handschuhen
Almsack
Crook
❀ 78/3

VEI

Hood
Waiders
Antigropeloes
Skivvies
Burnoose
Cincture
Gauntlets
Bodybag
Spade
❀ 100/7

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[1] NB: Garment-names being what they are, translation is by analogy, and merely serves as a suggestion in any given case. Prices, however, though converted todecimal and adjusted to allow for the Overstrike Scandal, are unfortunately rather accurate, at least as of $Fall_2$, Γ/XV/603.

From the personal effects of ðsp, *known in his time as "Beau Sature."*

RITUAL

Fragment of a Cyclend Spell for Weakening the Hairy Wyvern

[Original]

CEIA HIA	*ETNAM CIZ VACL*
	TRIN VELΘRE
	MALE
CEIA HIA	*ETNAM CIZ VACL*
	AISVALE
	MALE
CEIA HIA	*TRINY ETNAM CIZ*
	ALE
	MALE
CEIA HIA	*ETNAM CIZ VACL*
VILE VALE	
STAILE	
ITRILE	
CIA	*CIZ TRINΘASA*

[Translation]

"HEY PRESTO!"	pour again three times on the floor spread clawcuttings
"HEY PRESTO!"	pour again three times sanctified clawcuttings
"HEY PRESTO!"	pour again three times charred clawcuttings
"HEY PRESTO!"	pour again three times
"SHRINK, SHAGGY!"	
"RETRACT!"	
"INVERT!"	
"PRESTO!"	after spreading three times. . . .

FRIENDS AND WELLWISHERS[1]

NAME	ADDRESS	SCRIBBLED COMMENTS
Amente, Amante	Custodian's Cellar, The Bowre of Blisse	well to have friends in low places, but he snickers
Clante, Zarapiu[2]	The No Free Lunch Jollities, Clus	quickest comeback in HT; doesn't *look* like a camper
Encystê, Twittipu	GryphonPark, Mog	beyond her best years, but a nonpareil at immelmanns
Glagath, The	Cavern #7, East Enna	testy; just as well he was out that day
Gribbit, Brek	Swampside, Vshen	once a prince. . .NB: take own food next time
Kesar, Poliarch [¿Polyorch?]	Hellmarket, Port Farie	~~megalomaniac~~ entrepreneur, pending reinstatement
Kimber, Honest	The Hortulator's Lodge, RFD Barok	trustworthy, courageous, and dull as his axe
Leftwich, Morris	The Crypt, Horizon Ledge	so little left of a hero after the disbarment
Minni-Manni-Munni-Meeni-Mooni	Quayside Quincunx, Cer-by-the-Sea	harsh, but the greatest sister act in the profession
Mismire the Courteous	The Tollhouse, Enphurli	not as green as he's painted, but don't drink the water
Odon the Omnisanct	Lonespire, the Deadly Dale	subversive & self-righteous, best Barbecue in HT
Orsil, Drittil, & Fengwar	The Bourse, Enphurli	shysters, but invaluable for a student in deep disgrace
Peaches	The Penthouse, Perúç	didn't give her full name, but I didn't think to ask
Philmaron, Cmfwyp, Θ.B.	Slothhouse, Arkhiv	great scholar; has forgotten more than he will ever know
Sal-from-Clus	Sal's Stained Glass & Wedding Shoppe, Clus	indefatigably kinky, she really spiced the honeymoon
Schnof III	Underhill, Mt. Punctilious	nothing sadder than a displaced, odorous figurehead
Threeday Janice	The Maze of Ecstacy, Bolsena Proper	mistress of mementos, she merits a monument
Windlass, Walthar	Temple Boat Rentals, Temple Godtrust	marked by a far-off look and an unscraped skiff

[1] From the *Addressatbüchlein* inadvertently dropped by ȣsp in the Blessed Boudoir, Brummagem.

[2] This entry heavily scored through, marked with stains from tears or distilled spirits.

Thefarien Time:

Some Attempts at Order

First Attempt [1983]

TIME AND TRAUMATA IN HIGH THEFARIE: A NOTE

Carissimi: I turn, reluctantly, to the direct explanation of a matter which might otherwise be cryptic—and we couldn't have that, now, could we? Let me, then, be Horribly Clear about one point:

Time and Events in High Thefarie are/were, if not absolutely Viconian, still regularly recurrent—helical, as it were. The arrangement runs thus:

		5^4 years	=	625 years	=	1	CYCLE
5 CYCLES	=	5^5 years	=	3,125 years	=	1	ROUND
5 ROUNDS	=	5^6 years	=	15,625 years	=	1	MEGILLAH

The transition from one CYCLE to another was/is marked by cataclysmic disasters, after which civilization somehow began again, though not from the very beginning. It had a leg up, so to speak—and a leg broken. The transition from one ROUND to another, coincident with every fifth CYCLE's conclusion, was attended by pan-universal catastrophe, and Beginning Again was just that much harder.

ðsp's sojourn in High Thefarie, then, spanned the transition [known as *Cyclend/Cyclarch*] from CYCLE XV to CYCLE XVI, which was also the inevitably occurring transition [*Roundoff/Roundon*] from ROUND Third [Γ] to ROUND Fourth [Δ]. The full notation for the patch of time he spent in that fabled land would be, then:

Γ/XV/573 to Δ/XVI/1

You will observe that the notation of the CYCLE simply increases with each transition, while year-notation begins anew. The MEGILLAH was never indicated, except by scholars who had nothing better to do. The End of the Prime MEGILLAH had not yet arrived, and only the very pious and/or learned cared to evoke the image of an unthinkably traumatic unmaking and remaking [*Megillout/Megillin*], even if it was some 6000 years and more in the future, by putting down the Forbidden Ejaculation:

¡

I trust that this will enable you to understand such items as the following essay question, wrenched bodily from the Parageography final examination, or rather Terminal Praxis, of 1982:

> "III. It was, of course, the considered judgment of thinking Thefariens that the Cycles were too short. Rebuilding the World every 5^4 years is, after all, a strain, and cuts down on progress, to say the least. On the other hand, there was a certain comfort in the determinism. The Pattern was set; they knew (within limits) what sort of Cataclysm would take place where and when (well, roughly where and roughly when). But the opening of the Gardens, as you know, distracted the Third Wave of Invaders, and the World went crazy. It was only with the greatest difficulty that They channelled the Destruction properly so that They could Create again.

Specifically, what were the steps in the transition from FIFTEEN to SIXTEEN [Γ to Δ]? How was ðsp, who had nearly wrecked it all, employed to effect it?"

Second Attempt [1993]

BASIC DIVISIONS

Day [NAÇCI] —i.e., "sun$_3$." This contained 27 hours, but we shan't go into that now.

Pent [MAXI]—the nearest thing to our "week," this contained 5 days: OneDay, TwoDay, ThreeDay, FourDay, FiveDay.

Parapents [ZELMEX]—i.e., a "pair of pents," 10 days. A standard legal unit.

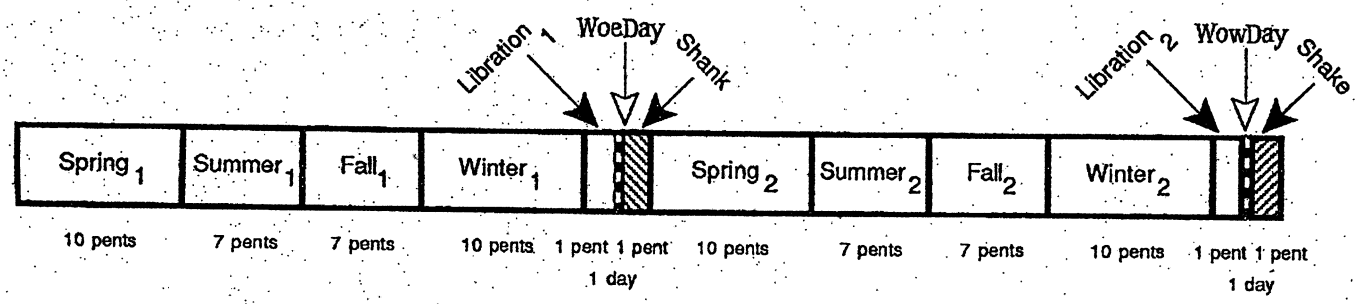
Pentpent [MAXMAXI]—i.e., a "pent of pents," 25 days. The nearest thing to our "month," this was also a standard legal unit. It was not always in perfect accord with the next larger division:

Season [KRTÇI]—actually, this translates as "envelope," but "season" is close enough. There were five. They were not of equal lengths:

Spring [LUVI]	10 pents, or 50 days
Summer [NIXNIX]	7 pents, or 35 days
Fall [CAÇI]	7 pents, or 35 days
Winter [PRMA]	10 pents, or 50 days
Libration [RIOVEN]	2 pents and 1 day. . . or, better, 1 pent, 1 day, and 1 pent or, in toto, 11 days

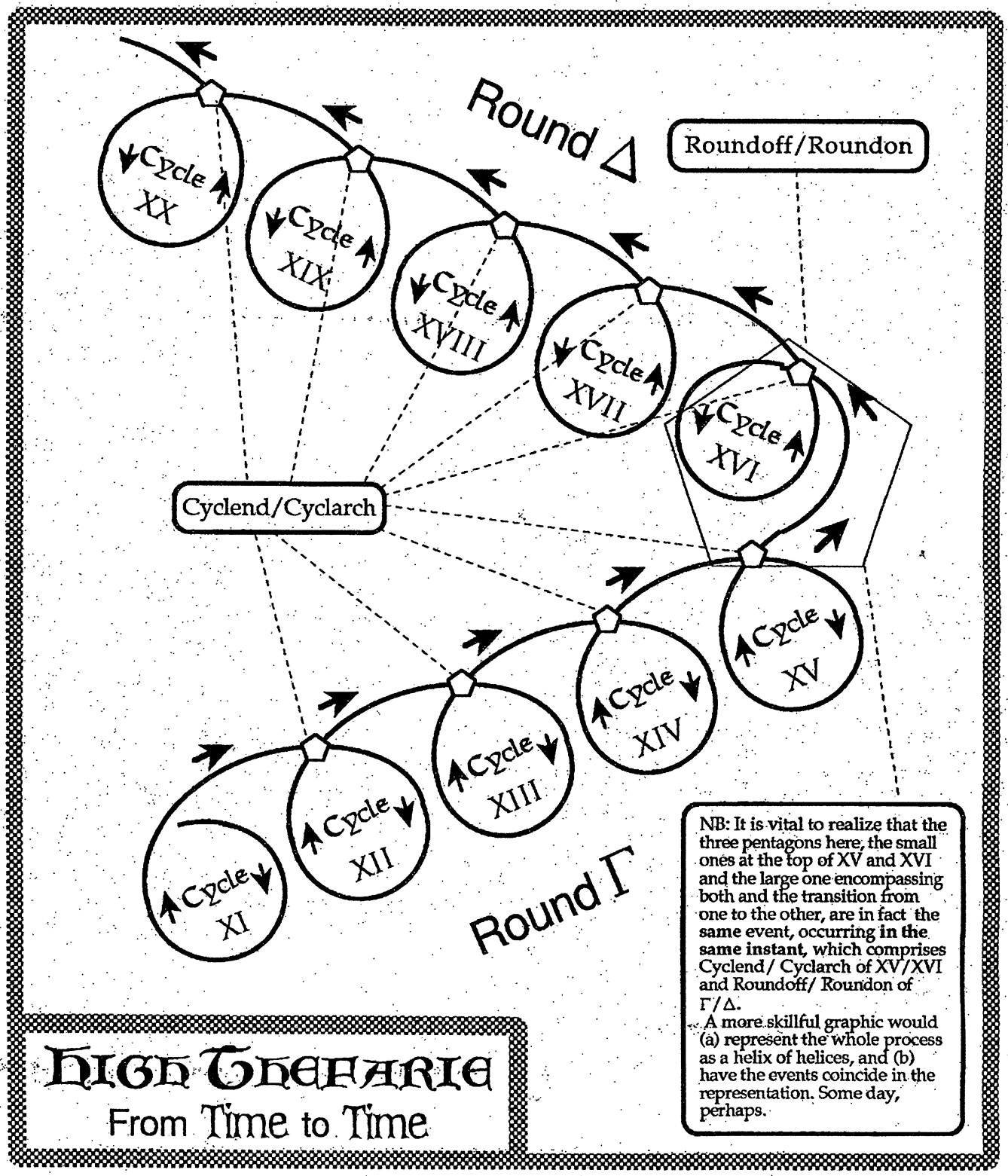
[**Libration** needs further glossing. It was a holiday sequence, consisting of a pent of preparation, a wild day of lament or celebration—WoeDay or WowDay—and a pent of recuperation and meditation—*Shank* or *Shake*.]

Year [ZELKRTÇEÇIZM]—i.e., a "pair of season runs." The above seasons each occurred twice in order during this unit. Add all this up and you will see that the Year works out to 362 days, and looks in diagram rather like this:



Third Attempt [late 1993]

Cycle & Round



HIGH NOTE[1]

i am too old for this[2]

physically
metaphysically[3]
eachthingthatisically

it is none of my concern

mystically
realistically
allbloodyistically

i look ridiculous

visually
contextually
everygoddamually

h a p p y s e v e n t y y e a r s o l d

bald balbutiant birthday boy[4]
in tootight[5] cassock and cramping clogs
trundling up the walled approach
to the top of a mountain to watch it
s p i n[6]
when i blow these blasted bedamned
b a g p i p e s[7]

---

1 Actually, two notes: The tonic of the key, D-flat, and its tritone, G-natural. [*Addition 1993:* And the note[s]—the writer of the first footnote might well have added—were sounded at Mt. Turnaround at the last moment of XV/625. Footnotes are supposed to *help* readers, for heaven's sake!]

2 Very probably true. But, given that ðsp had been employing this excuse since his late teens, few gathered there by the mountain were inclined to credit his protestation the least little bit.

3 This raises a neat problem: ðsp was ten days shy of his fifty-second birthday, in "real time," when his coracle was borne under by the rush of the Atchafalayah River and surfaced making lazy circles in Bredna's Bight, within hail of Temple Godtrust; in the process, he had "physically" shed 34 years. But the memories of the RealWorld remained. It thus follows that to consider him *mentally* (as it were) in XV/625, at the time of Cyclend/Cyclarch//Roundoff/Roundon, would be to confront a man just turning 104, an age far past mountain-climbing. . . or, indeed, bagpipe-blowing. He had, atypically, a point.

4 [*Addition 1993:* Which would argue that somewhere, somehow, it was 27 May. Moreover, a *particular* 27 May—in the RW, 27 May 1997. But the Thefarien calendar possessed no May, nor was ðsp born there. He might, of course, have taken a surrogate birthday during his time there; such self-serving expedients are not unknown among victims of galloping romanticism.]

5 A standard complaint with ðsp from his earliest years, in whatever world.

6 Actually, Mt. Turnaround's revolution was quite deliberate, even majestic. By no reasoned observer could the process be considered a "spin."

7 A curious instrument, the vibraphonic bagpipe [an illustration is to be seen elsewhere in this collection of the *membra disjecta* of ðsp's curious career] is unknown to RealWorld music, doubtless due to the downright impossibility, in theory at least, of preserving the lips' vibrations, begun in a cup mouthpiece, in the bag. But, improbable as it seems, the instrument works. Not well, but it works. [*Addition 1993:* But its occurrence in this text does raise a curious contradiction in the Wreceived Writings, which also contain wreferences—sorry, *r*eferences—to a fluegelhorn. In fact, one graphical wrepresentation shows ðsp immediately after the TurnaroundSound, with a curious

it has been ever thus[8]
the story of my life
letting myself be
imp ounded
ressed
osed upon

by an ingrate
establishment
that is never
app eased
roving
reciative

to perform an odd[9]
succession of futile[10]
deeds that are always[11]
disg raceful
runtling
usting

tote that swill[12]
heft that peatmoss

mulch those planetrees[13]
marry those women[15]

take that trip[14]
drain that swamp[16]

and other indignities that are really too painful to call to memory

---

4-valved brass instrument by his side that could be a fluegelhorn. Not a standard RW fluegelhorn, of course, but sufficiently fluegelled to resemble nothing much else. Bagpipe or fluegelhorn at the last trump? Where, then, does the truth lie? Certainly not in the middle.]

8 Again, a standard complaint. ſPſβ [ðsp's abbreviation for "The Powers That Be"] are always wrong in his writings, regardless of who they are, and despite what honors and benefits they may have showered upon him. There is no satisfying some people.

9 Yes. At least from a RealWorld viewpoint.

10 No. Without ðsp's ministrations [however skewly he viewed the results], High Thefarie would still be stuck in the GP, or Gestational Period, unable to go forward or back.

11 Not quite. His tenure as storyteller was an IL, or Imposed Labor, and he found it quite happily engaged, after the enforcements of the first few weeks.

12 Certainly an ungracious way for ðsp to refer to his time in the middle ranks of the Civil Service, the labors of which he performed [if we are to believe his own contemporary accounts] with despatch, skill, and even joy.

13 How like ðsp to blame difficulties that were his own choosing and fault on ſPſβ! The planetrees and the mulch, far from being imposed, were part and parcel of his chosen early profession, WorldBuilding/Landscaping. [*Addn 93:* The career, of course, peaked—if that is the word—relatively late, with the débacle at the so-called Gardens of Barok, whose opening endangered High Thefarie in Spring$_1$, 614. See note 15 below.]

14 The Enna Tour? A private jaunt. The Flotilla to Ywis? A vacation splurge. ðsp certainly can't mean the trips taken by his own theatrical company. The Fegatonian Investigation might fill the bill, but it was really not much of a trip. Not at all. [*Addn 93:* The foregoing note was written ca. 1984, before ðsp 's disclosures of such other voyages as LastQuest **Piglet** of 616-622 and the Faring to QuestLost Castle of 593-4, and the its writer would of course take this opportunilty to make proper apologies—if he didn't entertain the suspicion that events of this order were were not so much experienced by ðsp as excogitated, and that for the puling purposes of taking up space and frustrating annotators.]

15 ðsp was, by actual count, married eleven times, the majority [including the very untraditional and, indeed, shocking Sixth (!) Marriage] to Eniaca Omniversant. The other five marriages occurred in XV 583, attendant upon his new position as a fledgling PURYsuivant; the female parties were the well-known Quinquade of Cer-by-the-Sea, the sisters Minni, Manni, Munni, Meeni, and Mooni, and they, as is quite customary, were divorced early and made no demands beyond the dowry.

16 Research has been unable to determine the swamp to which ðsp refers here—unless, of course, he is recalling some of the labors attendant upon his disastrous design and execution of the Gardens of Barok, which he undertook on his own, and which very nearly ruined High Thefarie for good and all.

i m not in shape for this
nor was i ever[17]

if it werent for the lights
down there on the plain[19]

or maybe have a good climb
but no not a word

its certainly high enough
i could see the bowre[18]

i wish she d said goodbye[20]
or see you threeday

a flick of her jewelled hip[21]
and she turned and went

tit for tat

but enough of that now to attend to the points of my eschatological snipe hunt[22]

wind from the west[23]

foam on the plain[24]
the mountain spins

and the moons in trine[25]

so blow outlander blow
and save the sum of things

d flat my favorite key[26]
blow till your cassock splits[27]

blow till it all comes down[28]

i am too old for th[29]

---

17 Come right down to it, a great deal of difficulty is involved in thinking of an undertaking for which ðsp, a notorious high-liver, *was* in shape. The man was a constant reproach to all fit Thefariens, of whatever stripe.

18 Not unless his eyes were considerably better than we have any reason to believe: Mt. Turnaround's distance from the Bowre of Blisse varies, of course, but the least distance recorded is a matter of some 75 ZILACAL, and the mean has been more like 97, at least.

19 The campfires, martyrpyres, bonefires, searchlights, and pitch torches of the assembled CyclistWatchers, not to mention the illuminated signs of the camp-followers. There was also a BookBurn, which did not, unfortunately, include the bulk of ðsp's writings.

20 The reference here is to Eniaca Omniversant, his estranged wife. Their Sixth [!] Marriage had come to a blustering break-up the day before.

21 It is a source of wonder that Eniaca, in her low 60's, still managed to preserve sufficient beauty and muscle tone to carry off wearing the ritual attire of a Priestess of Tin—a costume that, if wadded up, can be carried totally inside two hands.

22 ðsp had used this phrase in anger just before leaving the camp. It struck the Watchers as near blasphemy, but they graciously declined to punish him as he so richly deserved.

23 The AntiCyclone begins.

24 The Rivers run uphill.

25 The Influences make themselves felt.

26 Less difficult than it sounds. D-flat is the normal home key for Thefarien bagpipes.

27 It did.

28 It did.

29 The manuscript, blessedly, breaks off here. Theatrics, not fate.

LONG QUESTIONS
from the Terminal Praxis, 1982

I. The Enna Tour, of course, was an alumni affair, an attempt by males in their thirties to relive the glorious peak of their puberty. That it ended in such disaster may possibly be attributed to the presence of bsp, who joined at the last minute and thus constituted that traditional cause of Bad Luck, the hUΘN, or *Sixth Man*. But why Enna rather than the Fens? To investigate the unsubstantiated folk-rumor that the Caves of Enna were an alternate entrance to Hell, the Underworld. And it must be confessed that the discoveries of the Five [plus, of course, One] were in the highest degree interesting.

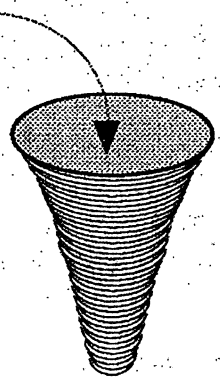
Specifically, what did they find? What did their findings mean?

II. It is dangerous, of course, to take Eniaca's early life as typical. In character, birth, and breeding she was scarcely the average upper-middle [or even lower-upper] class High Thefarien female. But she did touch all the bases, as it were, and even achieved distinction in three of the MλχL, the five Principal Happenings prescribed for young girls. Her attachment to an Outlander is thus all the more amazing, though careful students may note in her performance a tendency toward, let us say, unconventionality, if not downright *wildness*.

Specifically, what were these five ritual contests, the Principal Happenings? What did she accomplish in each?

IV.[1] It is easy, of course, to dismiss λVJZLλ hUçUR as a sty-bound bunch of romantic reactionaries, harmlessly intoning their prayers beneath Mt. Punctilious, engaging in the Spring Squelch at the Miasm, and manufacturing dietary foods in the Curious City of Mog. But this is to underestimate them seriously. The hUçUR were by no means harmless: They fostered the excesses of the Cult of pURΘ, and controlled selection to the Magi, and plotted overthrow under the code name BREAKOUT. Had it not been for Eniaca. . . .

Specifically, how did BREAKOUT proceed in the Spring of 583 under the guise of eccentric religiosity? How did Eniaca frustrate the fell design?



[1] For Question III from 1982, see HT 20, p. 27.

High Thefarie 23

ORDER OF THE SELEITAL LEAF

SECOND CLASS (RATHER MARRED)

hail to the hero
quoth the pentarch
surrogate bussing me
soundly on the nose

victor of trolltrial
resounded the shouts
somewhat muffled by
the rows on rows of
stuffed bodybags
that lined the bourse

my name was on every
lip and snout for
something above
a day and a half

then the survey began
and they tore down
the paper arches and
the quickly erected
statues ah fame

i miss the one with
the rampant wyvern
it caught my rueful
w i t

i shouldnt have slept
with it under my pillow
but i didnt dare leave it
lying around
a hideous discomfort
and eniaca loathed it
although she had been
more or less
r e s p o n s i b l e
for my receiving it

she also insisted
a b s o l u t e l y
that i shouldnt
wear it in public

one merry night
a bit of the stem
broke off slid down
and pierced me in the
gluteus maximus

she was happy but
it still bothers me
when the weather gets
w e t

i didnt mind being a hero
much or even a scapegoat
the fortunes of army life
have strange ups and downs
and even arounds

and the highest ranking
survivor should be prepared
to accept his fates decrees
even a warrant magus j g
who received his cushy slot
through family connections

but i wish the board had
grasped the design behind
my tactics of terror
my withering blitz

that assured quick triumph
for our side
and casualty rates
of over ninety per cent
for both sides

i honestly thought
i was working a spell
to cure a mild attack of
w a r t s

these days of course it goes under the bed but well then so do i

LONG QUESTIONS
from the Terminal Praxis, 1983

I. ðsp, of course, should never have been entrusted with the design and construction of the Gardens of Barok, for all that he possessed a Diploma in World-Building. His taste was too bizarre, his imagination too twisted, his small muscle control too gross for such a cosmically sensitive assignment, and the near-cata-strophe that resulted from his work could have been predicted. This is not to deny, however, that his Gardens, shocking as they were, displayed a certain charm, range, verve, and grasp—even though they also constituted a quite thoroughgoing contradiction and contravention of any and all principles of Exotic Landscape Design known to High Thefarie.

> Describe ðsp's Gardens of Barok in detail (with diagrams, if possible), demonstrating both their curious skill and their total unsuitability for their function (define that, too).

II. It takes more than the Right Man, of course, to make a Popular Hero; he must be in the Right Place as well. This is clearly illustrated by Leftwich's Leap: had he propelled himself on flat ground, the gesture would have been no more than ridiculous, and the Snollygosters would yet sit breakfasting in Enphurli. But he chose Horizon Ledge, and became Legend. The principle [Right Man, Right Place] is a universal one, as can be seen by a judicious analysis of the Heroes and Heroisms attendant upon Roundoff/Roundon G/D: Leftwich, Cmfwyp, Eniaca, Gribbit, and Kimber, to take only the most obvious examples, accomplished their marvels solely by dint of a healthy assist from the landscape.

> Furnish a searching heroicotopographical analysis of any three heroes (select from those above or add others, as you choose), showing how the Places combined with their respective actions to produce, in a word, Heroism. Be very specific and detailed.

III. You are familiar, of course, with the fragment of ðsp's discomfited lyric "Field Rations" (written on bivouac during the so-called "Food War" of XV-595):

> *. . . the solution to all this mess*
> *Is alimentary, my dear Watson:*
> *If we eat what we are, we are thus*
> *Undernourished. . . .and nobody said*
> *It was brain food. . . .*

Scarcely his best, and quite obscure (who is *Watson*, for example?), but it does raise the subject of the Eucharistic Schism, that totally Thefarien hassle that divided North (so to speak) from South (as it were) and led to the unpleasantness in the Dale. (To the *extreme* unpleasantness in the Dale.)

> Trace the Schism, and its attendant War, from the first pro-pork polemics to the last cracklings, giving particular attention to the interrelation of religion, diet, and geography. Do not gloss over the subject of Barbecue.

From the depths of ðsp's footlocker

IV. The question, of course, can never be properly answered: *Did she love him?* Love that corpulent, pink-skinned bumbler, that wimp of high degree and low attainment, that artist of the last-minute and nothing else? How could she? And yet. . . she allowed him to bear her six children, the last one highly illegal; she wrote the *Munista* pamphlet to vindicate his impossible behavior after Trolltrial; she died for him the prescribed Five Times—at Port Farie, at Clus, during the Sale at Mog, at the Temple of Tîn, and, finally, before Turnaround—all of which argue *some* affection.

> Choose THREE of Eniaca's deaths for ðsp, and use them as a springboard for a discussion of the interactions of ultimates in the Thefarien scheme of Love (as we may agree to call it here) and Death (which is a ruder term than "Temporary Annihilation," but scholarship must, on occasion, be cruel). Remember that the details of the occasion are quite important.

V. The Cycles and Rounds, of course, were set, fixed firmly. Everyone knew that, come the given time, the macrocosm (which is to say, High Thefarie) would stop, jerk, and begin again, one level up (so to speak). In theory, this should have conveyed certainty, but the actuality was little different from Chaos. There were too many Signs, for one thing; too many Necessary Preliminaries, for another—and they did not all jibe. Eniaca tried to make sense of the manifold confusion in her celebrated *Treatist on the Workings of the God Tîn*, better known by the highly disturbing name of PULUMXVA, but even she was forced, in the famous final paragraph, to admit defeat.

> But try *your* hand at the problem: *List and resolve* as many of the contradictions, inconsistencies, and incongruencies in Cyclend/Cyclarch and Roundoff/Roundon (both in prophecy and in performance) as you can. Three such items would be a good number.

VI. ðsp was, of course, in his later years an absolute neurotic on the subject of Paradise and Perdition -- or, as he pithily preferred to put it, Heaven and Hell.

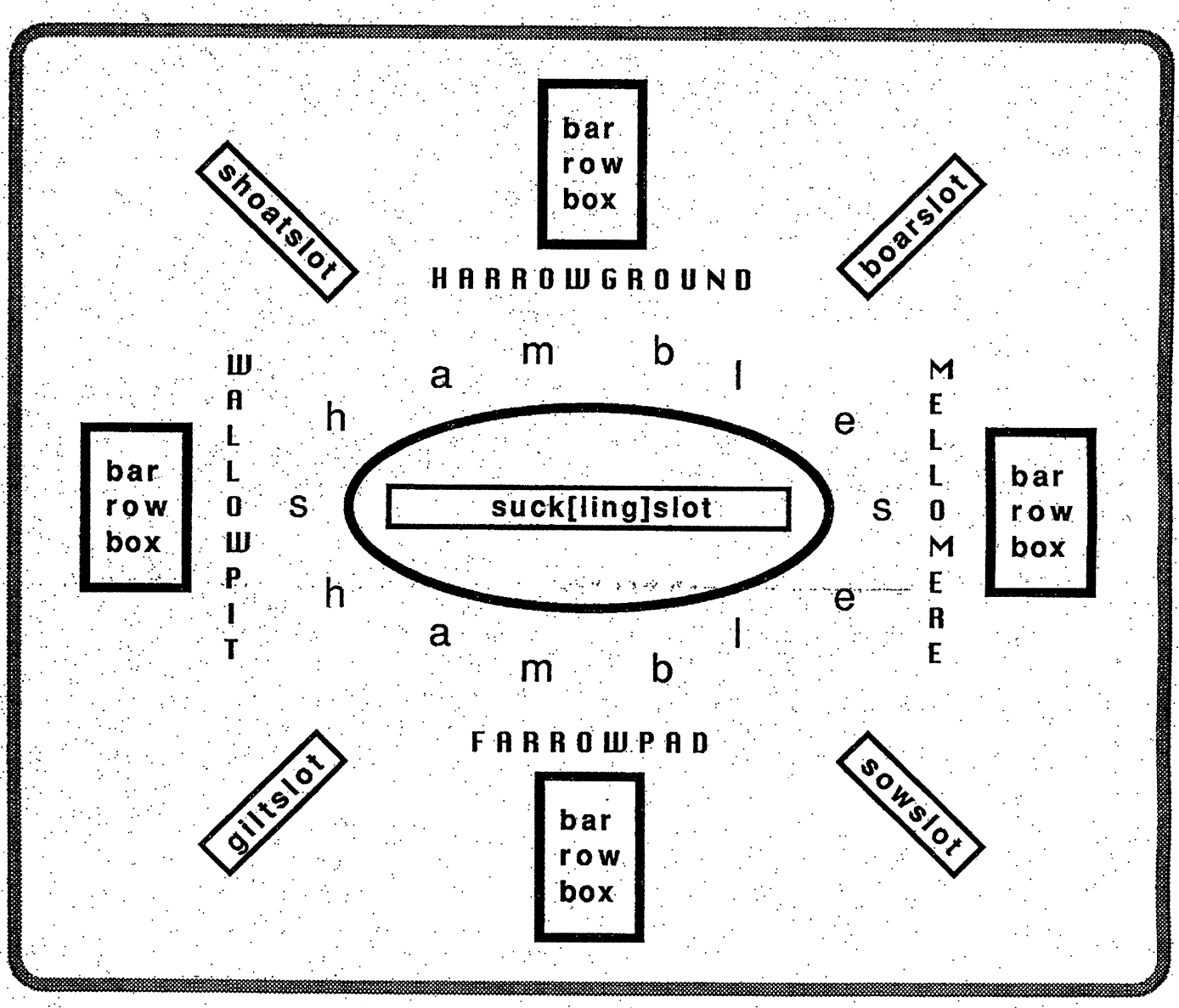
> List and describe FIVE of the volumes discovered on ðsp's NATÇ (roughly, = "bedside table," "nightstand") during the excavation of his domicile after The Departure. Give Dates. Quote. Be Full.

Notes Toward a History of High Thefarien Drama

I. Hypothetical Reconstruction of the Primæval Theatrical Configuration

or

Ur-Stye:



From dsp's barrel's bottom

II. Lecture Notes: FIRST BEGINNINGS
[Men's Institute, Clus, Sum_2 '98]

Theatre as have it today, w/elab sets, inv plots, scads chars, rel rec dev in HT. PreXV monuments v/ rare & fgmtry, Xcpt Enna Dromenon, of which later. Recnst of UrStye, acc by LGD [no! GCD] of earliest full plays [?250-515], exhbts curious feat: descrip, in porcine term, of nucl hum fam. Stage mkd by 4 stations, or slots, each home of a prin char-type: Boar (father), Sow (mother), Shoat (son), Gilt (daughter), genrlizd in troupe to Elder, Matron, Youngman, Ingenue. Fifth char/ actor of primvl troupe was BARROW, cast as needed. Use of term f/ cast male evdntly not denote neutering, but transsexuality. Barrow play eith male or fem roles, depndng on Area, wch is 2say genre, of play: e.g., priest in Mellow, midwife in Farrow, confidant(e) [either sex] in Wallow, Razorback in Harrow. Other exx of type, of course; not ltd. Curious inst of barrow as ithyphall Fufluns in Wallowplay "End of Greenworld."

Suckslot: In orig, as now, place of Audience, i.e. suckling who sdnly grows up in course of dram action. Implies orig aud of 1 (one) pers, tho hard believe now. Revolv seat, to face approp playing areas. [Set then, it apprs, f/ whole play, Xcpt Cycledrams and, of course, break into Shamblesplay.]

Areas/Genres: Area, then, as "governed" by flanking chars, detrmd type of play. Rec schlshp able to rcnst, verrrry tentvly, ARCHETYPAL GROUNDPLAYS [i.e., areaplays]:

MELLOWPLAY: BO:Amiable patriarch. SO:Doting granny. SH:Toddler. GI:Todlette. BA:Priest. Narratives, highly moral, told to GI & SH by edlers or priest. Minimal conflict. [Have done this (reconst, of course); is boring as hell.]

FARROWPLAY: Series of bscly benevolent monsters. SO:Widowed mother; Leiny at end. SH:Spoilt sib. GI:Questing heroine. BA:Midwife;guide. This is rite-of-passage play, to be strng or elab as desired. Serial conflict, usually moral. [Again, dull; but children cond to like it.]

WALLOWPLAY: BO:Master of revels. SO:Cay on halfshell. SH:Corruptor. GI:Corruptee. [SH & GI may interchange roles.] Carnival- or orgyplay, high on action, low on plot complication. [Lively, fun, b/ exhausting f/ all.] And BA: Odd proliferation of roles: confidant(e), pimp, preceptor, moralist, changemaker.

HARROWPLAY: This being epic struggle, either BO or SO may reprsnt Oldruler; the other takes Magus/Maga role. Analog to SH & GI, who do Newruler and

Sorrow-dead, depending. BA:Razorback [evil monst]; Babirusa [forbdng god]. [Adaptable to most historical situations; reigning favorite.]

SHAMBLESPLAY: Seems little doubt that, in UR-drama, Aud was actuly torn to pieces by enrgd actors. Well-doc case frm as late as 512, when ent family in hintlands beyond Vei rent in sm bits. ldng to Theat Laws of 515 ff. Not now, of course. BUT: In SHAMBLESPLAY, chars still lose all diffs; chuck off thoraxes, desc in black, w/ axes, on Aud--Xcpt BA, in purp, who lds them to suckslot, urges, makes play of gathr remains. [Now used only as endpiece; relatively rare. But Aud, in spt of their greater nums and fact that slaught is only mimed, alwasy apprhnsv. Fun, fun, fun.]

CYCLEPLAY: Ltr dev, of course. 5 acts, fr/ order to chaos, rming thru Mel, Far, Wal, Har, Sham. Rses cur point: Why not other arrngmnt? Why not snk t/ rest in Mel, or end in hpy Wal? But cert not in beginnings, and def not now. [We used this as end-of-season bash. Afraid, but they came and sat there.]

❀

Sexuality: Does not sm cur to us that all chars (Xcpt BA, where dsnt mat) are cast trnsexully, women tking men's parts, and viversa. Normal, natrl way of doing things. But we mght conject other srt of theat, where male rls played BY MALES, feml rls BY FEMALES. Obscene as this may appr, wd give a mr immed flavor to many fam confronts: Lars w/ Cay, f/inst, in arch Wal & dscndnts, or enumeration of delights in Mel. Give it a thought. Distancing: do we overdo it? How break illus and come to Aud?

❀

Costume: Those who know onl mod theat may miss vestiges of arch thoraxes, i.e. breastplates wch, in prim theat, marked chars. Fuzzy medal on BO = "bush" -- hairy Ur-chestplate; single emb curl on SH = "sprig", once cont no less than 5 spaced hairs. So for womenparts thors: scallops all left of SO's "sagpap"; rosettes only rm of GI's "pertpap." BA has prsntd probs to sm investgtrs, but actuly quite transprnt: the 2 pips at waist nd no thought at all.

❀

Prs Rem: Disastrous arch theat roadtrip Sum$_{1-2}$, '88, as roadie, scene des, & at end subs BA. SHAMBLES was actuly shambles near Vshen. Enna riot, due to inverted thorax, intrplated dialogue, sddn outbrk of purity near caves. Prison stay.Ldbl role of Eniaca: All I am, I owe to angl wife; that sort thng. Thanks.

THE ENNA DROMENON

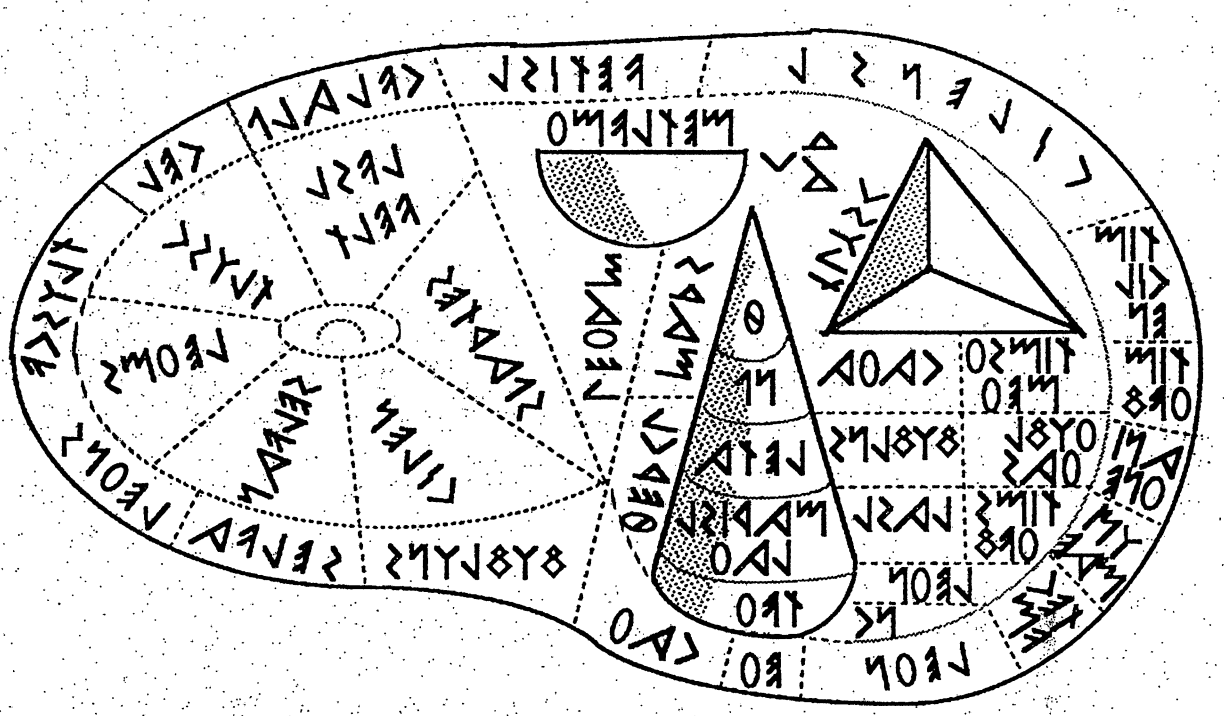


Fig. 1: The Fegatonian Grid [Actual Size]

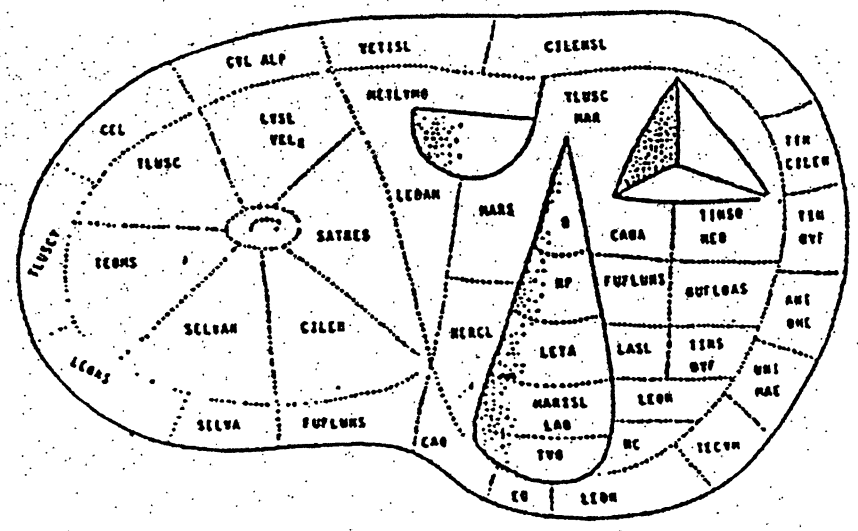


Fig. 2: The Grid Transliterated

REFLECTIONS OF A hUeN (SIXTH)

i should i suppose be flattered
it isnt every stranger gets the honor
of plodding around in gumboots through the muck
of climbing where no slant is of striding across straight drops
with pauses for slimy and gritty abasements at every bloody transition
from god to god to god to god to god oh god

be good
for your
c a r e e r
gummed that rheumy
ditherer the magus

oh sure
double
pneumonia
boosts one aloft
the mast of success

nothing
like rope
burns and grit
scars for tyro
worldbuilders

wish i
had a
clever
caver
cover

not to worry just follow this grid
he intoned and handed me this seedy
and battered platen of bruised bronze
all set about with scratches and gouges
and curious patches of ugly discoloration

follow it
where i asked
around the caves
he riposted and
blew his nose hard

so here i am in the dark plod strain flop yecch

if its so damned important to every aitch tee type
why cant they do it themselves rather than entrapping
innocent resident aliens with hints of sudden preferment
to perform what i can only regard as a sort of ritual hopscotch

and what
does it
all mean
anyway

beat the periphery first
i guess i m on the right track
the slither was TLUSC
and the fangs in the ankle
could only be LeNe
and now the leaves start
strangling yup its SêLVà

the slash could only be
FUFLUNS which means i m due
for a look at the sun however
brief unless this grids a liar
funny texture this has
for bronze feels like
wet pigs liver

and
theres
the sun
and
there
i t
goes

katabasis
into the pit
dodge back
and forth
another slash
till i reach
the bottom
or NC which i
cant pronounce

anabasis
pretend this
stalagmite is
mt turnaround
and shinny up
through LETAs mist
the lichen of NP
till i attain the
tippytop of Θ

must
get in
shape
if i m
to be
picked
for this
very
often

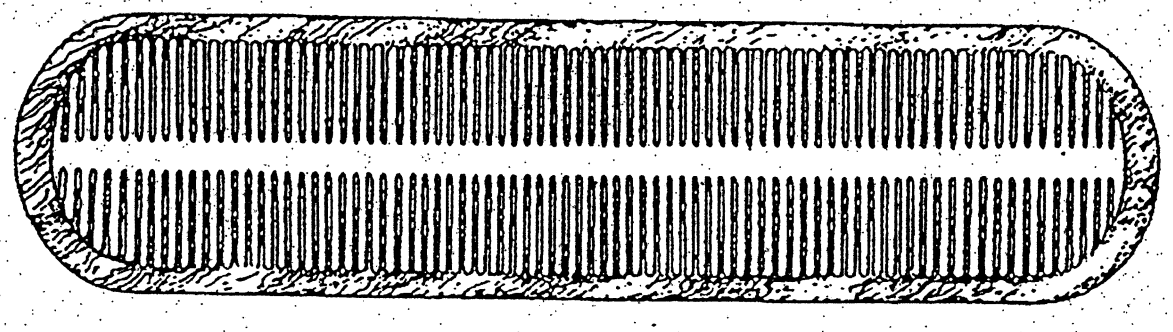
and here i stand but who turned on the lights i can see it all whatever it is the dark tarn down at my left and the trigon over at the right and all those disgustingly writhing gods vibrating in place if they dont look out theyll collapse the caverns and bring me back to ΘVT with all those arms to begin again oh no the wall is opening and the lights go out

well i hope that
ive saved the crops
or ensured justice
or maybe staved off
the rainy season

i hope that
someone will come
and set this leg
so i can go home
and sort this mess out

my first
religious
experience
and all i
want to do is

r
e
t
c
h



LONG QUESTIONS
from the Terminal Praxis, 1985

I. No one, of course, could really call ƀsp an actor. As the demurest GILT, he was uniformly laughable; he totally lacked the matriarchal majesty that marks an even marginally successful SOW. Besides, there was the matter of women's dress, never by him controlled effectively: such simple, everyday items as *culottes* more than once landed him in splayed disgrace. But, for all that, his intermittent career "in the Stye" [a somewhat forced translation of the HT idiom ΛχΝΛÇVeRS] can serve as a typical manifestation of the theatre of the time, ceaselessly contentious, intensely politicized, ultimately catastrophic for audience and actors alike. Drama, in those years, was disastrously true to its rustic roots.

> Trace ONE of ƀsp's theatrical tours (either that of 588 or that of 599), giving attention to the Five R's of the Travelling Company: Route, Retinue, Repertoire, Reception, Result. Present in detail the particulars of the last, awful performance which concluded the Tour you have chosen to discuss. Both Tours, of course, ended in onstage ruin.

II. High Thefarie, of course, was a huge country, a fact which the lack of scale on even the best map should not obscure. [This is not due to the ineptitude of cartographers: the unit of distance, the ZILΛC, was embarrassingly elastic, varying with the season, the weather, and the phases of at least one moon, so that the considerable journey from Mog to Tin's Temple might be reckoned at 107 ZILΛCΛL one day and 213 the next.] To cover the great spaces of that sparsely settled land, the common people usually resorted to foot and time: Gryphons required training and held only one rider each; Thoats were slow and very rare on the mainland; a seat on a χMΛÇ required that the passenger pronounce its name correctly—no mean feat, as the case of ƀsp and the overly pettish steed MINIMULUVΛNISeMΛMΛR-CeΛPNIIeVeNΛLΛ will have illustrated. Non-sentient ground transport was worse, of course: paving was regarded with suspicion, and the existence of the ***HIATUS*** decreed that all long-distance transport had to be, somehow, *transportable*. Had Eniaca known the troubles that lay in store for her during her "Mad Dash," the chances are that she would never have signed the Standard Travel Contract, much less actually started out.

> Noting ALL the various vehicles employed, the state of the roads, the dangers, the portages, the stopovers, and the forages. . . and detailing, of course, the crossing of the ***HIATUS***, trace Eniaca's "Mad Dash" from the Winter Palace to Tummling in $Winter_2$, 622.

III. One would, of course, think that ƀsp, pudgy and rising 67 when a breathless Eniaca presented herself at Marzipan House on that snowy morning, would have sat out The War Between The Sexes; such would certainly have been his inclination. But her Peremptory Challenge galvanized something in his lumbering frame. Pausing only to apply lip-rouge and slip into a long-forgotten pair of puce culottes, he was off into the drifts, following her tauntingly straight tracks. The whole Land knows how he raised a cadre among the discredited ΛVIZLΛ hUÇUR who had retired to Tummling to lurk, how he readied them for battle—their banner a feather boa, their warcry a falsetto "ILΛCVe ΛLÇΛSe!" ["Walk *this* way!"], their secret sign a limpwristed flap of the hand. But, in the subsequent confusion, accurate knowledge of the War itself, when Men were Women and Women were Men, became a rarity.

From the depths of ƀsp's footlocker

Set the record straight. List, in chronological order, the principal operations and battles (with locations and brief comments, of course) of The War Between The Sexes of 622/3. Include a detailed account of its final event—the surprising, orgiastic, apocalyptic, and inconclusive Battle Of The Bowre.

IV. Education, of course, is really acculturation. It prepares the young for docile life in the Great Outside, keeps them from Making Waves, adapts them to their inevitably shifting Roles in Society. ƀsp came to High Thefarie too late for most of the process, and knew of Eniaca's education only at second hand. But they had children, and those children were educated, and we are fortunate to possess letters home from Dødat, their first son, and Monca, their first daughter—letters sent by each at age 12, from the Fieldtrips that constituted the Peak of their training. Dødat, of course, was Doing The Tour at Camp Nitgedaiget down in the Fens; Monca was Running The Knife at Clus. Quite literate, considering their authors' immaturity, both letters gave a pithy presentation of what they termed their VATIEXE UNIAL [freely rendered, "instructional torture"], and inspired ƀsp, at a later date, to annotate them exhaustively. They are thus the most complete accounts of High Thefarien education, both of boys [for motherhood, of course] and of girls [for mercantile competition], that we can ever hope to have.

Give the text, EITHER of Dødat's letter OR of Monca's letter, together with a selection of ƀsp's explanatory notes, and show how the process therein referred to was designed to produce good High Thefarien men or women, as the case may be, or have been.

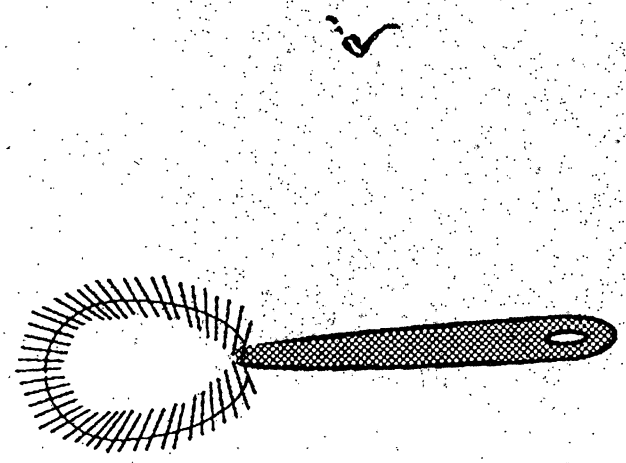
V. Critics, of course, noting the ubiquity of Set Sequences manifested in every aspect of Thefarien life, have termed the culture of that curious land "ritual-ridden," conjuring up the image of the sorely bedevilled average inhabitant painfully planning the events of her/his day and life by reference to a thick volume of diagrams and charts, mediated by *Hanguide*. Such a soulless, such a *reasoned* approach to the chaos of living, however valid it may seem to the outside observer, is ZILACAL away from the truth. Ritual was not imposed; it was bone of the Thefariens' bone, blood of their blood. They breathed it in and breathed it out; their culture was saturated with it. Even ƀsp, raised in the unthinkably permissive *Schlumperei* of an idiotically individualistic backwater, worlds away, even he, when he looked back from Marzipan House on a half-century of futility, was compelled to admit that the events of his life, both in large and in small, had Observed Plan, Conserved Pattern, Preserved Ritual. "ΘEMIASA MEX," he would mutter: "Fiveness is-ever-in-process-of-becoming-to-be."

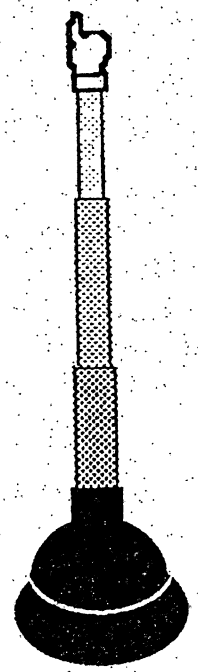
Take TWO Ganders, one long and one short, at ƀsp's stay in High Thefarie.
<u>Long Gander:</u> Set down the Five Principal Events of his entire life there.
<u>Short Gander:</u> Give a breakdown of any ONE of those Events into its Five Principal Parts. For each Gander, show how the sequence of Events (or Parts) fulfills at least ONE High Thefarien ritual. Be specific. Do not neglect location.

VI. *Trust*, of course, was not your average High Thefarien's basic virtue, though its value varied, rising to Tolerable in mid-Cycle and settling back at Abysmally Low during the instabilities—personal, political, and geographical—of Cyclend/Cyclarch. But *Lying* and *Cheating* always held up in popular esteem, and the *Confidence Game* bade fair to be the Thefarien National Sport. Thefariens were Gamers and Gamesters all, utilizing their curiously abundant leisure in one or another of numberless competitions, trooping around the landscape dressed as *Someone* [or *Something*] *Else*, loading their dodecahedral dice to attain *The Edge* [XURVAR], taking hideous chances in order to gain belief for their elaborate *Put-Ons* and, strangely enough, to authenticate this essentially bogus experience by undergoing the PULUMXVA, or *Validating Risk*. It might be supposed that ƀsp, though of only middling morality in his native culture, would have been totally vulnerable in High Thefarie, a lamb among wolves. But an odd inversion took place. His relative honesty loomed, to the surprised inhabitants, as unfathomable *Deception;* his complete

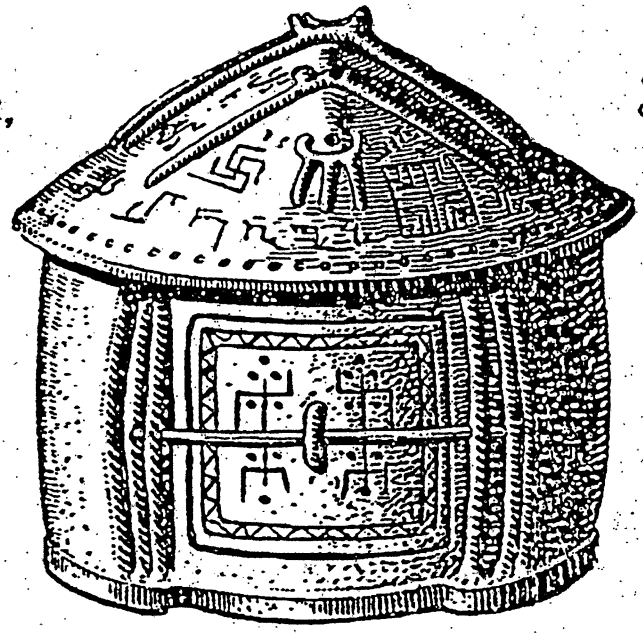
inability to *Play Roles* seemed the most baroque *Role* of all; his constant clumsinesses positively shone, resounding to acclaim as the maddest, most daring PULUMXVALA ever attempted. Before his inevitable *Decline-and-Fall-and-Deletion-from-the-Records* in 609, he had won the Five Principal Gamings without, in any case, quite knowing what he was doing.

List, with very brief descriptions, the Five Principal Gamings; give the rules of ONE and show, if time remains (and it should, it really should), how ðsp was able (if that is the word) to win (if that is the word) it.





HOME, SWEET



It was, all things considered, not a bad way to spend the Time of Anticipation, as the Thefariens, euphemizers all, insist on terming it. My cosmogony-and-landscaping business had bottomed out: I hadn't been commissioned to do more than dwarf a tree since Barok. My ankles were badly pronated since the Awful Clambake in Seagirt: I couldn't skip widdershins without collapsing, which effectively excluded me from the practice of major and middling magic. The patents of nobility, which is to say the contracts for the removal of royal excrement and offal, were gradually let to young, eager types. My acting skills were, let's say, too, well, specialized for the troupes of the day, while music in High Thefarie, as always, was strictly an amateur undertaking. There was nothing in ritual: there hadn't been a Dromenon since 605. The kids were grown, off doing what it took to get ahead in what was, after all, their world. Oh, they'd send me an apron on birthdays, but they'd tired of seeing the father who'd carried them for so many months, and who can blame them? And Eniaca. . . well, Eniaca the Omniversant was off somewhere, as she had been for years, writing whatever came to her mind and hand, usually self-help (**Out of the Maze: A Woman's Guide**) or popular apocalyptic theology (**Lo and Beholden!**). \I had, in fact, been facing my sixties in a rather gloomy mood, given that my occupational choices were down to Derelict and Recluse, when, out of the blue (or, as they say there, out of the mauve), the Ministry of Protocol-and-Applied-Fussiness (the nearest translation I can think of) called one morning, straightened out my life, put me on a fast **ΧΜΑϹ** to Tummling, and settled me in this little house. As Resident Storyteller -- **ΧΙΥΑϹ ΡΕϹΙ** – to the district.

From **ɔsp** *'s Lower Depths*

This surprised me, and unsettled me more than a bit. Not only had I told no stories to anyone throughout my life in High Thefarie,[1] but even I had no reason to think I could engage in that curious profession. Besides, I hated narrative. I always had. The human desire to pattern made-up experience in words had never struck me as anything other than Interference, white noise cunningly devised to jam effective communication. Unreality. Third degree or more from the truth. I couldn't stand it.

But the house was tied to the stories. And it was a lovely little house. Round, with curious signs on the roof. Not large, but large enough to hold the hundreds of books that came with it – folklore collections, dialect dictionaries, analects, pandects, encyclopedias, thesauruses, all the reference books that a tyro storyteller needs. A perfect place to live, for one who had nowhere, and no other prospects of income, and no one to look after him through his sad, inevitable decline. So I stayed, and became Resident Storyteller. In my marvelous new home, which I called "Marzipan House" immediately, to the puzzlement of the Prefect from the Ministry who saw me in.

It had one strange drawback, did Marzipan House. An outside bolt-and-bar arrangement on the door, with which the Ministry shut me in until I began to produce stories. Each day the Prefect came, and queried, "Now?" And, after a week or two, I began to produce. Never mind talent, training, or inclination: the desire to breathe the outside air can be a powerful motive.

Eventually, when he saw I meant business, the Prefect took the bar away. By that time, the children had come – the perfect audience, both naive and bright. And I told them stories:

BUDONON'S QUEST: My start: a folky treatment of sex-roles.
THE DESPOT TUMMLING: A local ktistic tale.
THE THREE BROTHERS OF CER, or, CAST BACK BY THE SEA: Soggy, I fear.
THE GIRL WHO LIVED IN THE TREE, or, WHAT TO DO? Something to do with a heartless hamadryad.
THE FORTUNES OF SAL: I had to clean this one up.
THE UNDERAGE GENERAL, or, A QUICK CURE FOR WARTS: Memoirs, Impure and simple.
SIX IS TOO MANY, A MORAL TALE: Well, fairly moral.
LUCKY LEFTWICH AND THE GARBLED WRIT: An idiot in court.
APRES LE DELUGE, MOI: A flood-story, based on truth and prejudice, in equal parts.
HOW TO BAKE A HOUSE: \I had the illustration to hand.
DOWN BELOW THE GROUND: A katabasis-tale, scary for the young ones.
THE KING'S NEW COLLAR: My first satire, a dangerous move.

[1] Eniaca and I had had some continuing private fantasies, which hardly counted. And I early gave up trying to tell the Thefariens about the land I came from; Texas proved very hard for them to take.

AN ACTOR PREPARES: A romance based on makeup.
THE COURTIER'S COMB, or, EVERY WHICH WAY: Rural poking fun at urban.
NEVER IS TOO OFTEN: A group of common errors routined into a standard fool's-errand-narrative.
PI-ING THE CATALOGUE: A librarian's horror story from my days in Arkhiv.
THE FIVE WISE MEN OF TUMMLING: The title never failed to send an audience into hysterics, even an audience of Tummlingers.
FAIR WON'T FARE TO ENPHURLI: An allegorical travelogue.

The above is only a sampling: I was really at work, and loved it. For the first time in my High Thefarien life, I had assured position, income, and respect: I was "posting the thoat backwards," as they say. Not even in the faraway groves of an American academe had I been so well-off. And so it continued for seven glorious years.

What inner demon it was that, in Winter2 of 622, made me embrace jeopardy like a longlost lover, I have no idea, but, whoever he/she/it was, the job was thorough. I circulated a group of three stories that, now that I look back on them, might well have been written by an enemy, if I had one, to discredit me utterly. But enemies I had none, until I put forth that trio. THE UNDERHILL WIZARDS was political by its title, which was bad enough -- but it took a soft line on the Sons of the Boar, and Court was up in arms. The Prefect dropped by and harrumphed both in sadness and anger. An abject apology would cure the problem, he felt.

Sitting down to compose the apology, I found myself thinking of Eniaca -- how she would have loved this brouhaha, had we only been together. She was ever a fighter. I began setting down odd items from our life, or rather lives, together. . . and by the next evening was telling the locals a rambling tale entitled THAT WAS NO LADLE, THAT WAS MY KNIFE, which was an instant hit. It named names and places and dates, which was a mistake, because the Prefect was back by the next noon. He had moved from harrumphing to clucking, and gave me to understand that, if I wished to continue in my sinecure in Marzipan House, I had better start work on a Panegyric, of approved metaphor and treatment, <u>immediately</u>. The thought of losing my glorious little home was too much. I sat down that very afternoon to write. . . .

And came to myself as the next morning was breaking, and I was seated at my desk in groaning stiffness, and chill, just putting the final touches and flourishes on THE PIT AND THE SPIT, a vicious slander on a Certain Imperial Figurehead whose name ended with a <u>Θ</u>, a spirant that was hissed over and over throughout the whole bloody performance. That was <u>it</u>, I felt: something within me was not going to let me meet my end gracefully. As I tried to figure out what to do, there was a bang at the door, and in burst Eniaca, brandishing a Standard Peremptory Challenge Form, which she flung at me before she disappeared. We hadn't met for years, but she said not a word. Turned and sped away through the snow. She had, I gathered, heard LADLE/KNIFE somehow -- though it wasn't a week old -- and had not enjoyed it.

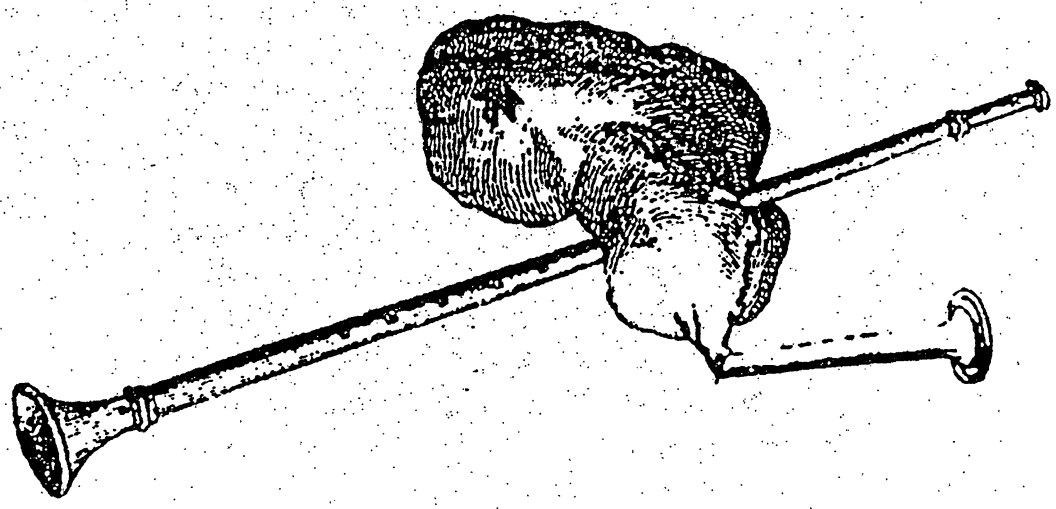
It rather looked like war, I thought. Not the proper occupation in any case for a man past 65 , and I was hideously out of condition. I hadn't worn a skirt for years, and my Moves, never the best, were bound to be rusty at the very least. But I couldn't stay there, not at Marzipan House. No more. Never again. Suppose I destroyed PIT/SPIT, and tried to go on as if nothing had happened?

Well, Eniaca would circulate the news of a Challenge Refused, which would lose me my appointment. . . which I would doubtless manage to ruin anyway: the demon inside me was simply not going to let me enjoy my life. The next time, I would doubtless commit treason in front of witnesses -- armed witnesses. The Prefect would come with a Cohort, to lead me, if lucky, away in chains, and if not. . . .

Better to embrace the inevitable, I thought, and control what I could of the future. I had hardly been a soldier, in spite of the ridiculous affair at Trolltrial, but I had been a actor, and that was close enough. I'd even saved a costume somewhere. Tight, probably: still, culottes were generally cut on the large side, and I'd been fleshy, that last awful Tour.

Cramped but triumphant, firmly wedged in the puce culottes, I spraddled out the door, then stopped. For a sheep as a lamb, I used to say: well, why not now? I found a dagger I used for cheeseparing, picked up the fresh pages of THE PIT AND THE SPIT, and tacked them to the door. Something to remember me by.

Whistling a bagpipe bourree, I strode off to fight a War.



Granfer Tales CXXV

The Last Tale

ef you dont stretch your ears my way you wont get the point which means youll have to learn this all by sperience n thats the worse possible alternative though i hardly see how any of you can survive the first thrust of their phalanxes *god what a pretty hand* **the hills go over here where the rising sun shows green against** the pig on the peak well oncet upon a time to rise and shine you bunch of hopeless limp wicks or whatever you *are you the lady who ordered the gold i have the invoice right* **heres the site of the first or wistful vista shooting across the** dale and into the trees our first objective since they next high on the tippytop his trotters clung which aint what they generly *do you mind if i sweep these out of the way* to accomplish this is messy but simple first grab your wyvern right at the base of the *sculp thats a funny name for that little hollow* is primed with the gel before you apply the match **your rivers for many a locus amoenus has been undone by uneven drainage leading to flooding** *i didnt mean to make you cry* oooh damn the rivers i mean the torpedoes full speed *a head so beautiful with jaw curved just* so old budodon perched and peered allowin as how he d never been in such a fix afore and had better vamoose fore the bird came *back so smooth to the hand and eye that i d study and stroke it except i have better things to* perform the drill precisely as you were taught in basic youll be all **right turn from the second stand point delivers your viewer to rapt contemplation of**

what we might call a folly if it werent so squat down you fool and make like a fledgling grunted the boar under his breathe deep as you aim then scream when you make the *thrust and twist* oh damn again i appear to have made a slight digression **from what is after all hardly steady progress since the only goals** the exit from the nest accomplished our clever boar *which is the story of my life* **stile has to be climbed which breaks the plane of advance in start ling fashion eliciting the sudden cry of** *oooh* oink banzai **haha** gotcha i knew i d remember meanin me buster our hero asked not the easiest task since his mouth was full of wing should withdraw and tend the wounded during the **hiatus or as its commonly called the gap between the two identical thrusting** *piqued perhaps why no not really just tender* me the appointed projects at the stated time secure in your trust that i know what i m doing **what i know** *what i m doing* what i know what i m doing

Identification Lists
from the Terminal Praxeis, 1982-1986

1982:

PEOPLE

The fragments of ðsp that have been transmitted to you have been notably lacking in proper names. It is not the case, however, that High Thefarie was/is inhabited merely by Eniaca, the Five, TARXI the Revelationish, and PURΘ. As you know, edible fungi and Something In The Water combined to produce in High Thefariens high degrees of Personal Integrity, Idealism, Devotion, and just plain Looniness.

To jog your memory, here is a list of twenty (20) Eminent Thefariens for the End of XV. Give succinct identifications of any FIVE (5) (of course). They were/are enthralling individuals; make your identificatory paragraphs just as enthralling. (NB: Again, we're dealing in analogues, Names and Epithets, etc., have been more or less translated from the Thefarien.)

1. Cmfwyp Philmaron, Θ.B.
2. Mismire the Courteous
3. Langan Weizl, yclept "Knuckles"
4. Honest Kimber
5. Minni-Manni-Munni-Meeni-Mooni
6. Sal from Clus
7. Kesar Poliorch
8. Schnof III
9. Morris Leftwich
10. Threeday Janice
11. The Wholly Abominable Kharon
12. Twittipu Encyste
13. Odon the Omnisanct
14. Heartstopper Helgon
15. Brek Gribbit
16. The Glagath
17. FitzMacSonides the Foul
18. Mr. Fester
19. Orsil, Drittil, & Fengwar
20. Peaches

1983:

SAYINGS

[including Proverbs, Catchwords, Mottoes, Notable Quotes, and the like]

Each of the ten items hereinafter listed was current (and even famous, in some cases during those harrowing last years of XV (in part and in whole).

Choose any THREE. Write a paragraph on each which will give: Organization, person, place, or whatever associated with; Date; Importance; Any other pertinent information, including the Real Meaning:

1. "TURCE MURILA" (= "Happy Hocks!")
2. "The wet point turns the page."
3. "Fair won't fare to Enphurli." (*More than* ðsp *'s use of it.*)
4. "Even the liveliest river runs backwards."

5. "We have always relied on the witlessness of strangers."
6. "Tell it to **pure**!"
7. "Never sit under a *seleital*."
8. "Better blue than through."
9. "*Shoat in the Dark*."
10. "**cλθ** knows I'm willing, sailor."

1983:

PLACES [primarily BUILDINGS]

Each of the twelve items hereinafter listed was famous, either throughout, or at some time during, the maddened last years of XV.

Choose any THREE (3). Write a paragraph on each which will classify the place (what is it?), locate it (where is it? in reference to the HT map and the spots thereon listed), describe it (what does it look like? what is its function?—if that applies), and account for its fame (what happened there? who was involved? et cet). You may also date locale, occurrence, or whatever.

1. The Pentacle
2. The Maze of Ecstacy
3. Quayside Quincunx
4. Peaches' Penthouse
5. Downside Cottage
6. Hellmarket
7. Gryphonpark
8. The Möbium of the Magus
9. Slothhouse
10. Kharon's Lair
11. Lonespire
12. Questlost Castle

1985:

EVENTS

Each of the ten events [happenings, occurrences, whatever] hereinafter listed took place during those harrowing last years [52 years, 10 days, to be precise] of XV.

Choose any THREE (3). Write a paragraph on each which will locate the event in space and time, tell what happened and who was involved, and relate all this to, shall we say, the broader thrust of history, geography, and whatever in High Thefarie, given that they are *all* events of intense complication, difficult to extricate from the swirling ebb and flow of those chaotic times. They are all *important*.

1. The Exotic Interlude
2. The Sudden Reversal
3. The Third Distressing Disclosure
4. The Collapse of the Best of Intentions
5. The Curious Case of the Orgiastic Praxis
6. The Terribly Twisted Trine
7. The Fourth Outrageous Opening
8. The Beleaguered Banquet

9. The Underhanded Betrayal
10. The Highly Inopportune Encounter

1985:

GEOGRAPHICAL ANOMALIES

As one might expect of a parageographer's paradise, High Thefarie was absolutely studded with strange places, odd features of landscape, and upsetting geological impossibilities, unnatural markings of a wholly perverse nature. So many, in fact, that they did not find a place on the latest map: of the ten following items, eight have not been cartographed. But no matter; you know the place.

Choose any THREE (3). Write a paragraph on each which will locate it (if necessary), describe it (with particular attention to its strangeness; what does it look like? how does it work?—if that applies), and account for its fame in High Thefarie (what happened there? who was involved? etc.). Give dates and persons where applicable.

1. The Humongous Geode
2. Lonespire
3. The Mad Mesa
4. Bridgeoak
5. The Flying Island of Tlusc
6. The Damnable Delta
7. Hollowood
8. Vainvale
9. Concertina Pass
10. Downspout

1986:

OCCUPATIONS

As ȣsp found to his cost while taking a flyer at the Middle Orders of the Civil Service, the work burden of High Thefarien society was conceived of in a fashion utterly outside his RealWorld experience, and hence divided into portions—i.e., individual occupations—that were often, to put the best face on it, bizarre. Nor was this strangeness confined to the public sector; private employment could be just as odd.

Below are listed ten occupational rubrics of late-XV High Thefarie. Choose any THREE (3). Write a paragraph on each, describing the duties, prerequisites, perquisites, locales, remuneration, and importance of the specified job. Remember that these are not nonce occupations, but standard positions that have their places in the Thefarien econom-icosocial scheme of things. Remember also that they have been listed because they are, from our point of view, more than just the least bit, well, *unusual*.

1. Flasher, Second Class
2. Imbalancer
3. Overfondler
4. Heartstopper
5. Petty Vizier
6. Deller's Apprentice
7. MacSwisher
8. Graduate Enfoncer
9. Underdunger
10. Journeyman Looper

1986:

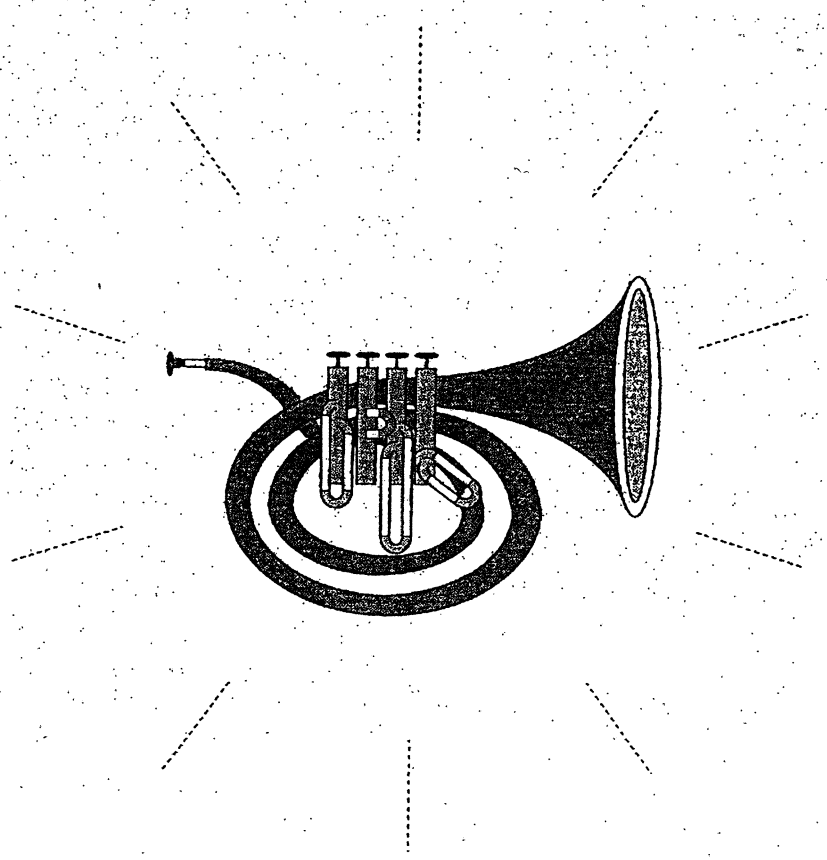
DOCUMENTS

If the average High Thefarien did not swim in such a sea of paper and print as we do, he/she still found that her/his life was filled with a great number of documents, both short- and longlived, which, let us say, either prescribed, or described, or proscribed his/her behavior. These documents varied from official to private, but they were, above all, *Important*,embracing a spectrum which, in our world, runs from, say, The Star, through People and The New York Times, to the Constitution and the Bible.

Below are listed ten such documents, all currently influential during late XV. Choose any THREE (3). Write a paragraph on each, describing its nature, contents, frequency & locale (if such apply), audience, and the reason for its importance. Remember that the are all either official publications or, at least in their functions, very near quasi-official; there is thus only one work of fiction on the list.

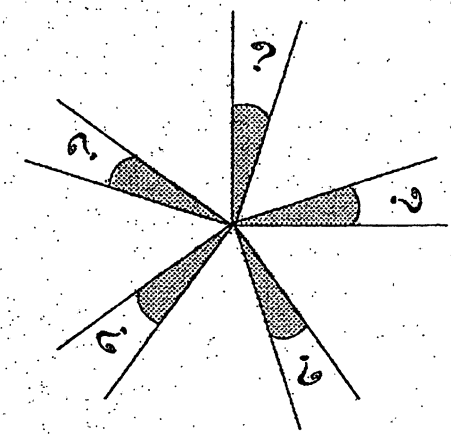
1. The Red Book of Vshen
2. The Pental Spy
3. LO!
4. Basic Motherlore
5. Stars in the Stye
6. Son of Song of the South
7. The Glut
8. Leftover Life
9. Apocalypse Digest
10. The Court Circular & Breeding Guide

Oh. Where known and applicable, give author, editor, or the like. And, just for kicks, a typical sentence or so from each choice.



from THE THEFARIEN PENTADS

The Five Vile Vistas of the Gardens of BAROK



M ΘUN: The *Wistful,*

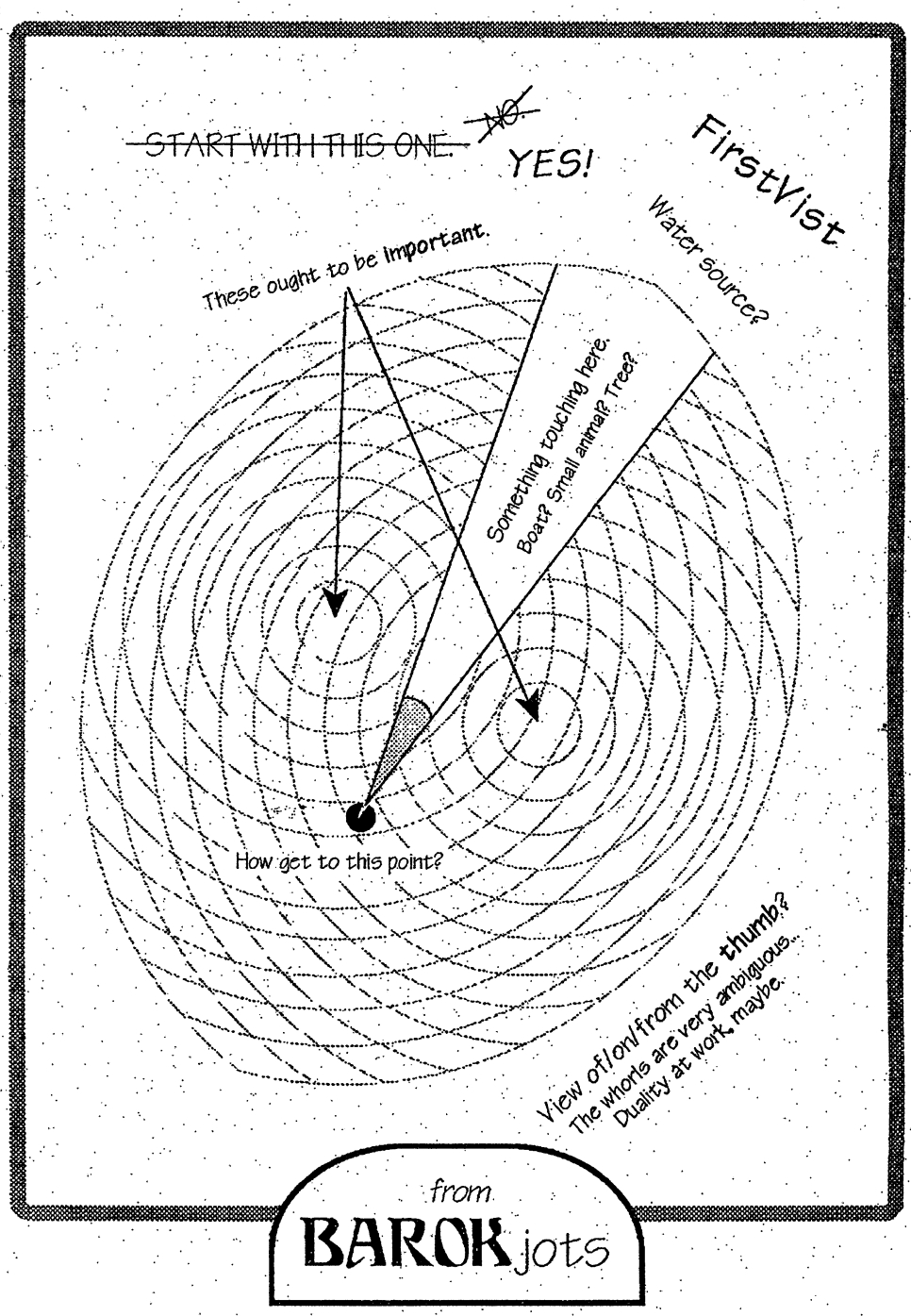
MEANWHILE, THE SNOLLYGOSTERS, HAVING LOST

which shot from a suddenly exposed scarp to feast the viewer's eyes on a ragged spinney of dwarfed larches framed between two gentle peaks, the whole somehow intended to evoke poignantly the blissful days before weaning, but instead dragging the eyes of adult male HT viewers through a damped but unending oscillating sine pattern which, in three out of ten, led to the nausea and catatonia attendant upon the longsuppressed experience of the Primal Scene. . .

Λ ZAL: The *Risible,*

THEIR TIMEPIECE, WERE GATHERING TEN YEARS EARLY

which delivered the wary viewer from the shady embrace of a bosky dell to the rapt contemplation of a decapitated and delapidated cone in the form of a revolving tower, the whole such a mingling of luxury and squalor as to (or so it was fondly hoped) create, in the very act of regarding, an unstable interfacing of two incompatible planes of the soul that would find inevitable resolution in peals of jolly laughter, but, the rotor being set too high and the cams insufficiently filed, the tower spun at a searing wobble, condemning fully a quarter of the gathered viewers to the nausea and catatonia attendant upon massive non-volitional reinforcement of the Alpha Wave. . . .


~~START WITH I THIS ONE.~~ ~~NO~~
YES!
FirstVist
Water source?
These ought to be **Important**.
Something touching here.
Boat? Small animal? Tree?
How get to this point?
View of/on/from the **thumb**?
The whorls are very ambiguous...
Duality at work, maybe.
from
BAROK jots

1 C]: The *Soulful,*

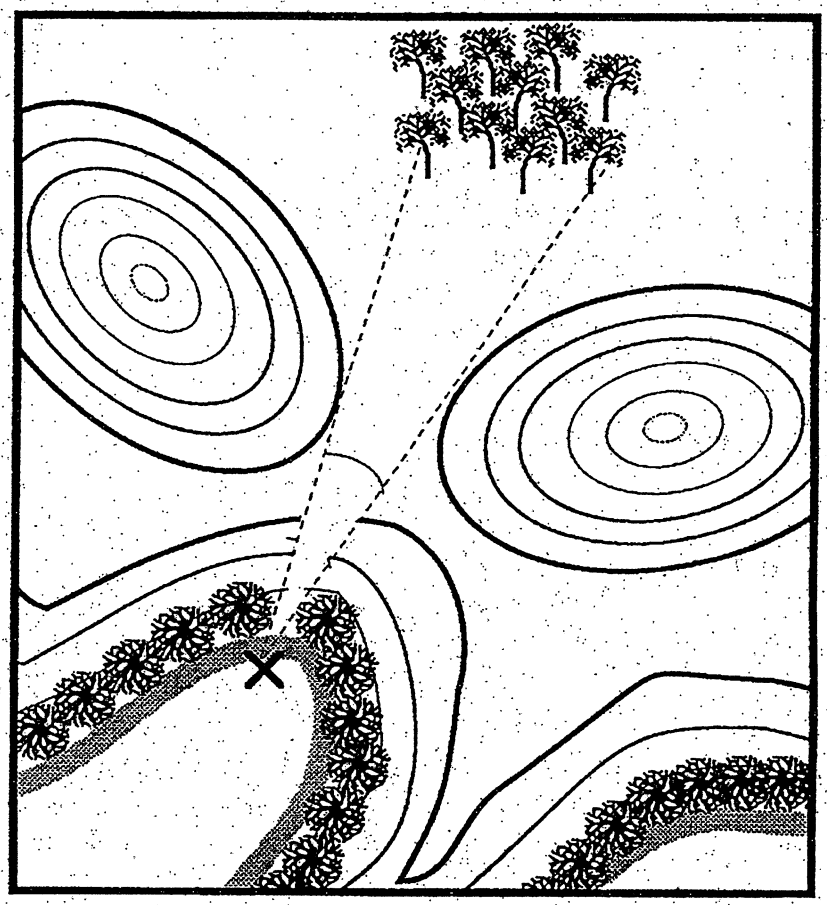
which, reached as it was by a hefty clamber up a totally unexpected stile and issuing upon a grassy plain studded, here a copse, there a copse, with lozengy firs which guided the viewer's amazed gaze to a massive fountain spurting its damnedest in unending honor of that mighty divinity of rest, recreation, and rut, Tîn the Hyperextended, the whole such an interplay of knoll and bole and pool and wash and plash as to command ineluctably *Rest, Perturbed Spirit,* to all but the utterly insensitive beholder, went sadly awry in direct consequence of the designer's delay in ordering mulch for the firs, whose oval foliage, dry and friable that fateful opening/closing day, was easy prey for a sudden onset of ball lightning absolutely instantaneously contemporaneous with the rupture of a hitherto unknown pocket of natural gas beneath the fountain just as the viewers arrived at the top of the stile, the consequent conflagration engendering loss of faith in fully half the beholders, not to mention the nausea and catatonia attendant upon accelerated reversal of longcherished Fundamental Beliefs. . . .

OVER OPPOSITE HORIZON LEDGE, POISED TO ATTACK,

1 ÇΛ: The *Apocalyptic,*

which, designed as it was on the basis of the emblematic Hell buried somewhere beneath the waste between Enna and the Miasm and known to most only through the sketchy stylization of the Fegatonian Grid, aimed at scaring the gallogaskins off the battered viewer, who had reached the seepoint by a harrowing slide from the toothy wideopen maw of an outsize granite snollygoster sharply down a suspiciously clammy canal into the bowels of the earth and through a bosspocked gate, the whole arranged to burst into flickering, terrifying life augmented by the slitherings and gropings of the automata that staffed the place, but, the power source having been lost when the oil store suddenly drained into the vacated gas pocket, the greatest store of topographical grotesques ever assembled by the hand of Thefarien remained unlit and unseen, and the titled survivors, and a poor clutch

BUT AT ENPHURLI



Something lacking in the execution. Sigh.

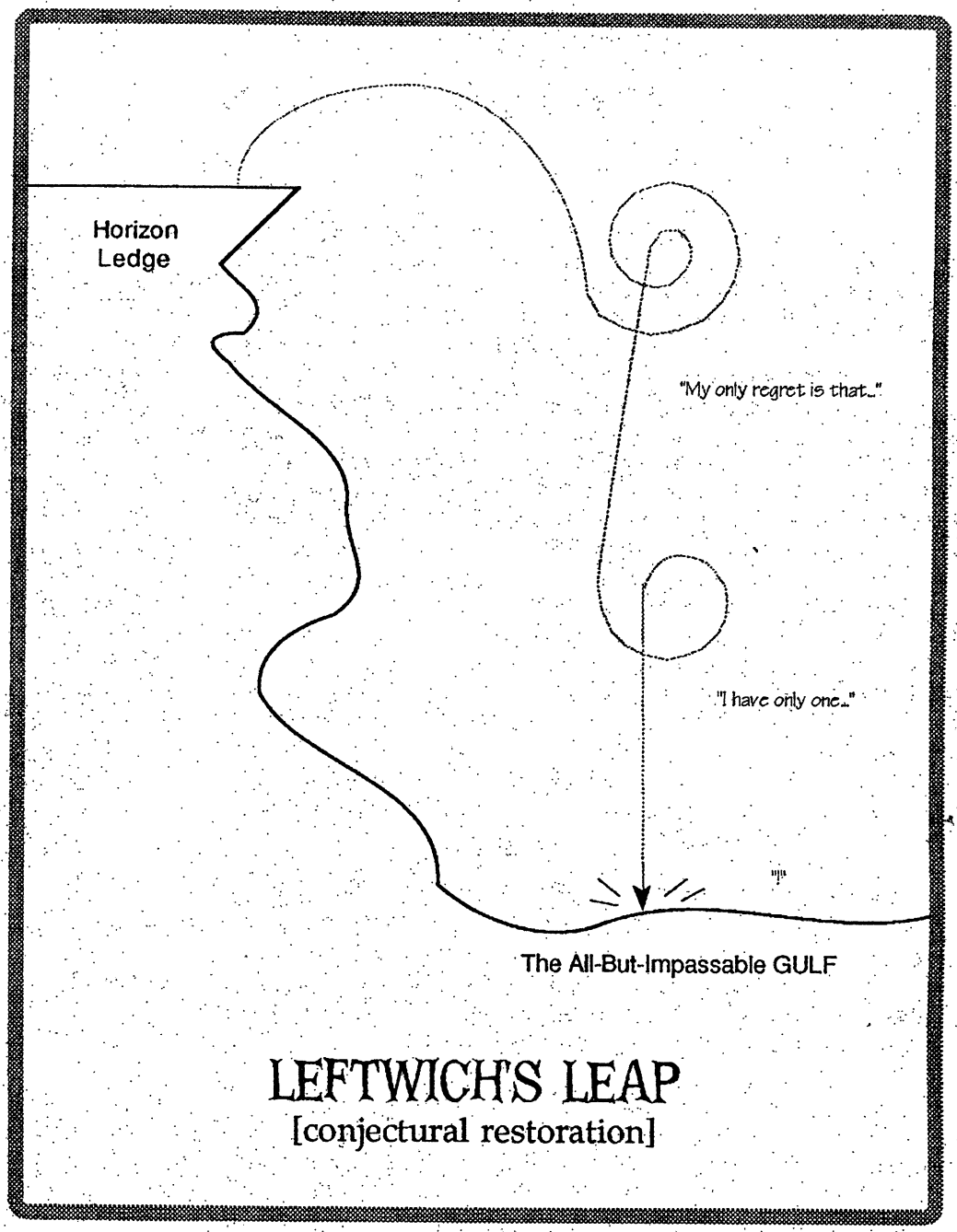
THE HALLS OF POWER WERE VACANT AND VULNERABLE

they were, of the opening/closing-day crowd fumbled their way to the only light, the candle in the EXIT sign, which having been achieved, more, many more than half were suddenly struck by the onset of galloping ennui, heretofore rare in these parts, but since a veritable plague, afflicting as it does fully all of its victims with the nausea and catatonia attendant upon rapid and irreversible bouleversement of raptly Anticipated Titillation. . . .

ⲙ ⲙⲁⲭ: The *Transfigurational,*

INASMUCH AS EVERY RULER AND CIVIL SERVANT ABOVE THE RANK OF DECAPENTE HAD GONE TO SEE THE NEW GARDENS DOWN AT BAROK, AND THE REST HAD TAKEN THE DAY OFF.

which, cunningly conceived to ferry the spiritually cleansed viewer in a self-steering boat across a wide, unruffled mere to a flowered isle topped by a neat but tasteless castlet which, upon entry, proved to be much larger and infinitely more opulent inside than out, where, gazing into the wavering surface of a curiously framed mirror, he would behold himself at once arrived in the richness of the place and at the same time unconfined, roaming by the still waters and green pastures through which he had so lately passed, whereupon he would raise a richly wrought cup for the draught that cheers, went, due to partial power failure and some industrial sabotage in the formulation of the enabling spells and charms, completely, if you except the fact that there was after all a boat, wrong, with the result that the mere drained, exposing the track and cogs and rendering the ride exceedingly bumpy, the dock on the isle could only be reached by an arduous hand-over-hand climb from the prematurely beached boat, the lilies had wilted over the path, the mockup castlet displayed advanced symptoms of woodrot, the interior opulence sprouted disgusting blue fungus, and the mirror, working only sporadically, displayed the viewer in the midst of a mindlessly carnal contretemps in the stews of downtown Clus, while the draught, in which the three game remaining beholders of that first/last day indulged, induced, not cleansing and rededication, but the cathartic nausea and catatonia attendant upon participation in what it were not exaggeration to term the Acme of Quintessential Disaster. . . .



Given the greatness of Leftwich's Leap, whereby spectacular military unreadiness was even more spectacularly recouped, the day avoided, just barely, being an absolute catastrophe, but still, take it all in all, it must be counted one of the sorrier patches of time in the country's history, especially since the art of Landscape Gardening—that glory of the Thefarien genius, thitherto productive of The Bowre, Bridgeoak, The Deciduous Dwarfplot of Broslyn, the Maze of Ecstacy at Clus, and the Succulent Spreadlet that commands the approach to Assembly Rock—suffered in those bewildering hours a body blow from which it had not recovered more than ten years later at the trauma of Cyclend/Roundoff, contenting itself during the interim with a sad series of hypothyroid theme parks with inadequate metaphorical underpinnings that would loom as disgraces if they didn't, to a park, squat instead, affording DSP no comfort at all in the knowledge that he was, however indirectly, responsible for the tawdry charms of such a parageographical mischmosch as the Minor Reservation.....

LONG QUESTIONS
from the Terminal Praxis, 1986

I. LAW, of course, is a necessary bedrock for civilized societies in what we nervously call The Real World. Willingly if not knowingly, we sacrifice most of our individual freedom to LAW, and in return we gain, in addition to a modicum of comfort and personal safety, a soothing sense that such entities as Cause and Effect not only exist, but somehow *govern* that jumble of randomness, our Real World. LAW confronts the chaos of our days, measures it, cuts it to fit, and files the neat pieces away to buttress and bolster, as Precedent, its appointed function of Yardstick to what, if you listen, is really the howling of the void. It's crazy out there, but no matter: LAW will look after things, LAW will supply structure, LAW will show that Reason, someway or other, rules the Great Higgledy-Piggledy of existence. How unlike High Thefarie! There, in a fixed and ritualized civilization, no such need for stability existed. In fact, quite the reverse. Daily life, existence itself, constantly declared the workings of Cause and Effect. Events recurred through the succession of Day, Year, Cycle, and Round (and doubtless Megillah) because that was the way it was supposed to be: Everything Was Set. LAW arose, of course, since even the most thoroughgoing determinism does not produce unanimity, but with what a difference! Our LAW counterfeits stability in the midst of chaos; Thefarien LAW, quite deliberately, aimed at establishing an isle of utter wildness at the center of the absolutely fixed. There was no Precedent as such, no appeal to the wisdom of accumulation, for no accumulation existed. A steady stream of Laws, of course, proceeded from the Nellies at Enphurli, but their period of power rarely lasted longer than a pair of pents (*sic*); a year was almost unheard of. On the lowest level, this meant that *normal* "courtroom" practice was such that it can hardly be described. There did exist an appointed Judge (VATIEXE), but that was all. No two trials resembled each other; in fact, were it not for the obvious implication that accumulation of some sort did exist, one might say that every action-at-LAW did its damnedest to be *unique*, unlike any other, and thus supply a potentially stodgy world with ever-crazier pools of Chaos.

> Compare and contrast the SECOND and FOURTH Divorce Proceedings of Enlaca and DSP—the gloomy, matter-of-fact, indeed vicious SECOND, and the hilarious, orgiastic, three-ring circus of a FOURTH. Be quite specific in matters of venue, Judge, "jury," arguments (if any), and disposition (including verdict, if any). Compare the outcomes, which is to say, the immediate fate of the principals. (To refresh your memories: Divorce II was in 600; Divorce IV, in 620.)

II. Change did, of course, occur in High Thefarie; even such a trivial document as DSP's "Notes Toward a History of High Thefarien Drama" shows as much. What strikes us, from this remove, as odd is the Thefariens' *attitude* toward Change: *They could not admit that it had happened.* Prisoned as they were in a deterministic world-view that allowed for no deviation from a Grand Plan [or, rather, Grand Plan], they found it necessary for their psychic well-being to cling to what was often a ridiculous illusion: that they lived no differently than their grandparents had, back to the beginning of the Cycle. If a difference from the past could not be subsumed, somehow, under the Plan [or, rather, the Plan], they simply refused, by what appears to us a deliberate, communal act of mental blind-ness, to believe that such an anomaly existed, and this refusal governed their responses. Nowhere is this better seen than in the collective reaction to the sudden efflorescence of public architecture that began early in 605 as part of the normal Cyclend building boom: Due to either the machinations or the ineptitude of a pudgy copyist in the basement of the Ministry of Structure, plans and mauveprints were altered drastically—and, as was Thefarien practice, followed slavishly to the last detail by builders. The effect was swift: by 608, the landscape had blossomed with a series of architectural anomalies, all of them public buildings, which violated custom, gravity, and good

taste, and for which the Thefariens, whose standard for such items was Low And Squat, were totally unprepared. Giddy and shocked, they adapted amazingly by *Pretending* and *Counterbuilding*. When assaulted by the appearance of, say, the Möbium or Lonespire, they first asserted to themselves that this was merely another example of plain-vanilla, no-more-than-five-storey Thefarien Middle Squat; they then set about masking the building to justify that assertion.

> Choose any THREE buildings from the maddened Boom of 605-608. Show how they differed drastically from normal "code" building in High Thefarie, and demonstrate how the Thefariens, by mental set and supplementary structure, assimilated those differences as samenesses. Diagrams would be appreciated.

III. The Thefariens, of course, are creatures of configuration, even as we. . . but the favored configuration is quite different, though it might be said, very loosely, that both of us are attracted to ENCIRCLEMENT. This is hardly, however, a real equivalence: We RealWorlders, aggressors all, strive to be on the *perimeter* of a circle [real or metaphorical], pressing in; the Thefariens, by contrast, esteem the *center*, and bend their efforts to *be surrounded*. The causes of this curious proclivity are lost in the mists of time, but the effects are there for all to see, most obviously in military strategy, where the preferred Thefarien tactic is to occupy an exposed point, preferably a lone mountain, and wait for the enemy to be ranged around on all sides. Thriving on what we would term Utter Hopelessness, they pick the weakest sector, concentrate forces upon it, and peel the circle's circumference back to its vanishing point. This preference for being under total pressure is not limited to war; gamers and gamesters all, they look on life as *resistance to attack*, and consistently put themselves in the center, so to speak, in what to us would be the Position of Maximum Disadvantage. In war, business, overt games, and love, this orientation is found; had ðsp known about it at the beginning of his courtship of Eniaca, he would have been spared several karate chops and one extremely painful groin kick.

> Choose ONE (1) battle, ONE (1) business, and either ONE (1) game or ONE (1) love affair, and show how this sub-logical tendency to be encircled governed both the strategy and the outcome. Be extremely detailed in ONE (1) of the instances.

IV. Carnival, of course, even in our hypertrophically restrictive society, is a time for Breaking Loose, for casting off momentarily those shackles which bind us together. . . as the authorities at such focuses of fun as South Padre Island have yearly cause to lament. High Thefariens, however, differed from us in this as in much: The regular recurrence of an equinox or solstice in High Thefarie brought forth festivals, of course, especially among this ritual-ridden people, but such frenzied gatherings signalled no relaxation of Plan or Pattern; they merely, during the specified period, changed the labyrinthine rules they lived by for another set. And this adoption of a different rigor was not felt to be change; merely *intensification* of certain latent aspects of the normal, everyday Ways. The simple shopgirl on holiday might appear, to the uninstructed observer, to be abandoning all trammels as she writhed and flopped rhythmically in a deep wallow of warm mud. . . but that wallow was the wallow [in a reproduction, of course] of a Titled Princess of the Realm, and the shopgirl's every slide and splash was governed by tradition. Woe betide that uninstructed observer if, forgetting this point, he decided to profit by Chaos and jumped in beside her. . . as, strangely enough, occurred in the case of ðsp at the General Bountification, Art Exhibit, and Communal Slosh near Vçen in Summer_2, 588.

> Choose ONE (1) festival—the one above, near Vçen, or the Brummagem Transmittal, or even the Hyperextended Orgy within the Precinct at Clus. Show how its ways (a) manage to invert the normal structure of High Thefarien society, but (b) insist upon the continuance of rules, rituals, and restrictions. . . albeit of a quite different sort. Be graphic; a diagram might not be amiss.

V. You have read, of course, of the females who constituted the entire population of the Greek island of Lemnos, and of their novel method for ensuring the persistence of their society—which is to say, their enlistment of the willing ministrations of such sailors as happened by. An analogous procedure may be determined in the case of the land of High Thefarie, whose inhabitants' every urge was devoted to bringing about their world's finis and subsequent rebeginning—Cyclend/Cyclarch, Roundoff/Roundon. Thefariens, of course, were bountifully supplied with both sexes; what they needed to effect their goal was a *non-Thefarien*, an *alien*. The fact is, Cyclend/Cyclarch could only be caused by a series of totally unplanned, unique acts, acts such as no tradition-bound Thefarien was capable of conceiving, much less performing. And so, as the Cycle wound towards its end, the nets would go out (so to speak), snatch an alien (usually a human), and drag him/her in. Tradition held that High Thefarie had been unusually fortunate in the Alien for XIV, known as Ed (she gave no other name). Ed came late (about XIV/ 623), performed her Five Ministrations with dispatch and neatness, and departed to universal appreciation. How unlike ðsp, brought on half a century too soon for XV, who never really understood his function, proceeded by inept trial and manifold error, and left behind him, not an economical quint of ministrations, but an extraordinarily messy tale of 5^3 bumblings. [Unkind souls would arrive at a total of 5^4, but some stretching is necessary.] For all that he was effecting Roundoff as well as Cyclend, ðsp reduced the place beyond Chaos.

> Choose THREE (3) of The Lady Ed's Five Ministrations that brought about the Cyclend/Cyclarch at the end of XIV, describe them thoroughly, emphasizing her neatness and dispatch, and compare them with THREE similar attempts on the part of ðsp, showing how he left disaster where The Lady Ed had been all smoothness.

VI. Spring, of course, meant much the same to Thefariens as it does to us: freshness, the triumph of light over dark and light over death, rebirth, rejuvenation, fertility on the rise. But there was a darker side to Spring in High Thefarie, especially Spring_2—the Season of Surgery. The butcher's calling had been highly honored in antiquity [*"Ytte ysse a poincte compleatly moote,"* observes a fragment of a chronicle of Sɴɯɑɸ from mid-XIII, *"whethere y^e Yefariens doe abhorre or reveere y^e Pigge, but cotte ytte they doe, and with a righte doughtie wille"*], but the sudden taboo on pork which followed the Exaltation of the Swine at the beginning of XIV, and the consequent freeing of hordes of Master Slicers for other work, led to the slow but relentless rise of what we will call Cosmetic Surgery. It certainly had little if any pathological function, this snipping away at the bodies physical that comprised the Body Politic; its aim was the objectification of *status* by subtracting what was *sound*; the removal of diseased organs was left to journeymen. The principle was Conspicuous Consumption, rather: the Master Deller who lacked his little fingers could obviously afford a hireling to perform *Hanguide*. Thus it went, till it appeared that quadruple amputism had slaughtered social one-upmanship. But the Opening of the Chest Cavity in XV/555, abetted by a standardized system of scars denoting what had been removed, spread new fields of endeavor before the eager surgeons, who cut withe a righte doughtie wille until Cyclend.

> Describe, in agonizing detail and with charts, the excess of disposable inner organs with which Thefariens were blessed. Note the social cachet attaching to the removal of each, and specify the scar/sign thereto assigned. (NB: This must be answered inventively enough to overcome your Guide's distaste; he is now sorry he brought the matter up.)—One further item: Tell, once and for all, the story of ðsp's operation.

CLUVIAN MONOLOGUE

¿

pardon me maam but would
you be potheththed of any
thecretth
ethpethially thothe having referenth
to the current of the river dektht
thutth as might keep
an unfortthunately impoverithed
and temporarily dithtreththed

THPY

from thtarving
in the
thtreet

?

curtheth be on your thtock and theed
mithtreth

not a good job
blew that one
shd know better
than to hit on
these urban
sophisticates

and the accent
i dont have it down
there shd be a gurgle
coming out over the
rolled tongue poking
between the teeth

¿

hey bud
interested in any
redhot

WORLDS

i gotta beauty here
an orgyworld
fits in the inner pouch
selfpowered
has a zoom lens
for detailed viewing
easily cleaned

and its yours for only
an official secret or two
a bonus will be given for plans
of the coming crackdown
on mt punctilious
howzabout it

?

may a withering blight attack your secret parts
buster

scratch another pitch
he l o o k e d official
given the epaulets and
all that braid looped over
his ears and the lacy slip
two inches below his skirt

can it be that ive lost
my powers of observation
not to mention the fine edge
on my discretionary rhetoric
my muff shd be stuffed with
classified matter by now

¿

guess what missy
this is your lucky day
yes indeedy you are
the 625th member of your profession
i have encountered this morning
which entitles you
to this curiously wrought

TICKLESTICK

for home or office use
upon presentation of
the merest clutch of
official secrets
having reference
to the revised approaches
to the winter palace
gathered during your pursuit
of your joyous lifestyle
so what do you say to
that

?

and a highly impractical same to you with bells on
schatzi

this doesnt seem to be
my day or rather let us say
that i am seriously in danger
of starving to death in these
putrescent purlieus unless
i get it all together somehow

can it be that my costume
is somehow turning them off
but thats ridiculous highly so
my seams are straight i am
winsomely betogged in the
standard garb for the street

perhaps i should essay
the direct approach

¿

HEY THERE ANYONE
ALLOW ME TO INFORM YOU
THAT THIS PRESENTATION SET OF
BAGPIPES
LOADED WITH EXTRAS
REINFORCED SEAMS
GOLDRIMMED FINGERHOLES
& CURIOUSLY WROUGHT
SPITVALVE
WILL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF
THE FIRST VOLUNTEER
OF CLASSIFIED MATTER
IN RE THE GOVERNMENT INSTALLATIONS
DOWN AT THE DOCKS AT PORT FARIE
TO A CERTIFIED WAR HERO
HAVE I ANY TAKERS

?

may respectively appropriate hideosities strike each and every one of you cultureless quislings

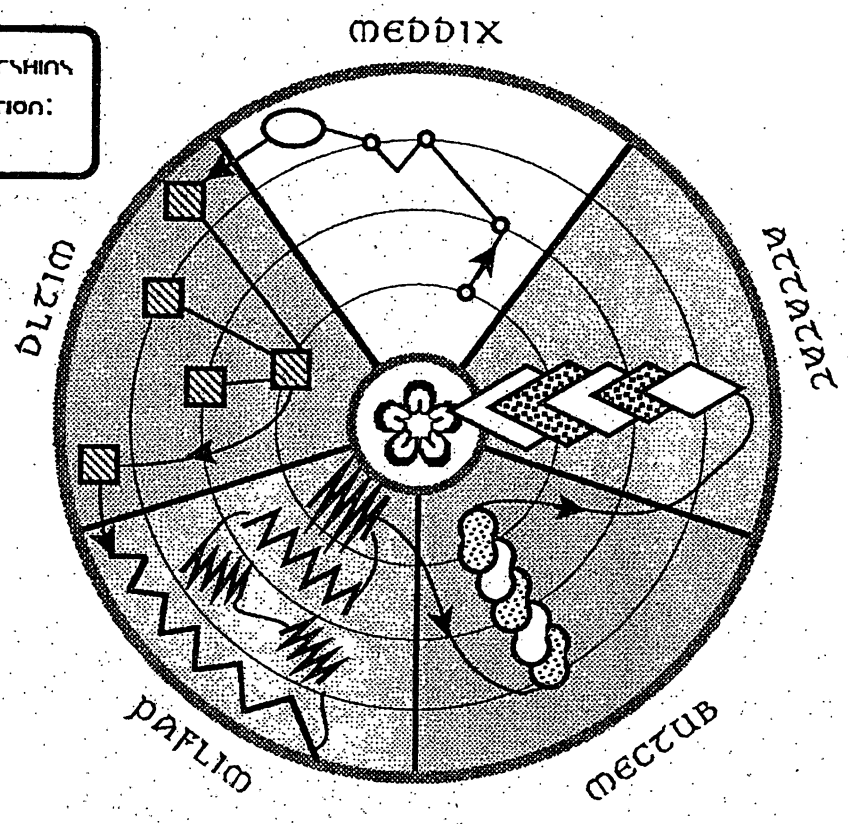
incomprehensible action
scarcely to be expected
from a clutch of tourists
out for a good cholly time
with purses loose wits slack
and hence enhanced vulnerability

can it be that i am working
the wrong intersection of
this overly depraved district
the one spot suffering from
a pinpointed pandemic of
nothing less than virtue

¿?¿?¿

The UTTERLY MISBEGOTTEN CONCERT
on the Wily Islet of
TLUSC

The Widdershins Improvisation: Score



The Widdershins Improvisation: ThemeHow

MEDDIX

a word anent everything
nothing is ever over
try as you insist
it all comes to
blatt

DLTIM

let me counter that with
nothing is ever begun
puff as you persist
it never gets to
twangg

PAFLIM

speaking from the middle
everythings in process
forever startless
never stopped
bzzzz

MECTUB

not exactlly au contraire
nothing has direction
aint goin nowhere
what do I care
fooom

ATTATAT

to round this philosophy off
nothng has any extension
or can at all persist
beyond a simple pop

The FACTS more or less

How
I asked myself
that very muggy
afternoon
did we ever get into this
It was not as if we didn't have
other gigs
admittedly not top drawer
but certainly better than
playing for a crazed enclave
of defrocked priests fitted out
in snouts and trotters and
curly tails
But there we were ensconced
on an islet
in a lake
on another islet
in another lake
on yet another islet
in the midst of
blue Ruin
Could we possibly please them
I wondered pondering on
our status as
the sole exponents of
Regressive Urban
in the entire country
which meant
for all I knew
the entire planet
Were we not making a mistake
serenading radical nuts
who rather seemed as if
they might be more than a
little hostile
And yet
I reassured myself
as I polished my cup
mouthpiece
and faced the wildeyed
throng
there looked to be
a certain amount
of fairly frenzied
energy exchange
from group to audience
and back again

Boy was there ever

We went wrong from the very
first note
which was as it happened
mine all mine
Ordinarily a commencing clam
is no great drawback in
Regressive Urban
and is even to be sought after
But this was different in that my
meddix's primary airbag burst
And though I shifted to an auxiliary
instantaneously *well almost*
the resultant *phthwatt*
not only startled the unco guid
from their orgy of porcine self-
congratulation but set a tone for the
subsequent proceedings that
was not so much reverent as
not to put too fine a point on it
impiously raucous
Prçna was blowing **dltim**
and he coughed onto his
secondary strings a move
which prompted Clni
who was really much too tense
for a **paflim** performer
to stick his finger *completely*
up his nose and generate a
random series of oscillations
that drew an astoundingly low
repeated *thwobble* from Nic's
mectub and brought
the High Priest straight up
from the trough
to greet a perfectly mistimed
irregular series of explosions
from Çaça on the **attatat**
I still think that the situation
might not have been lost
if we each hadn't tried to save it
and thus engendered not only
an origastic riot of the pious
but a weird series of harmonic
vibrations that made the islets
and lakes take off straight up
into the middle of the air

Regressive Urban was our own invention, born of Enphurlian anomie and the leavings of bebop that I'd brought along tucked away in my chops, with a remembrance of how a raga might sound, all surrounding a hard center of nihilism. This took place early in Summer2 607. I had just turned fifty-two, or was it eighty-six?

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT on the Terminal Praxis, 1987[1]

And so, Oh Best Beloved, we sidle to the end *cancrizantes*, crabwise. Your worlds, in all their infinite variety, tremble on the brink of ultimate concretion and amalgamation; mine, at this moment clinging precariously to its spotty unity, is about to be dragged apart into forty–odd sorts of Special Creation. On Saturday next, I shall ask you *Searching Questions* about High Thefarie, questions to which you will reply with the utmost sangfroid and savvy, for High Thefarie is a *Thing You Know*. Know as well as the back of your hand, or the neighborhood where you grew up. It is merely a knight's move away, two blocks over and one block down, and *You Have Been There*. You may have marvelled, during your first trip, at its close resemblance in particulars to many of the Otherworlds we have studied, but that is no cause for wonder any more; the place is familiar, its ins and outs as much a part of your consciousness as the configurations of a well-worn jogging shoe.

You have stood through *Cyclend/Cyclarch* and watched Mt. Turaround revolve during the Ultimate/Initial Invasions and Destructions.

You were there, at *The Horrid Sausaging in The Dale*, at *The Futile Harangue* when the *Council* met on the *Ropewalk* in CLUS, at *The Profusion of Images* which swept away *The Concord of Lake Seemly*.

You were watching, closely, when Mt. Punctilious erupted early and forced *The Rift in the Succession*, when *Lake Ruin's* draining corrupted five classes of student priests at Bolsena, when Dsp's creation of *The Gardens of* BAROK came close, all too close, to *Breaking the Pattern*.

And you know *The Lands Around*, ill–cartographed though they be. You have fared to the *West* on *Quinquest*, to see your centerboard carried away by the spire on the temple tower of *The Sunken City of* YWIS; you have fared to the *East*, through that dreadful interplay of plain and desert and platte and steppe, to view the wholly abominable practices of *The Races Without The Hoof*; you have fared to the *North*, where the Cycloclasts huddle *Outside of Pattern* and *Beyond All Form* in *The Windless Wild*.

You have not fared to the *South*, but who has?

You have known Eniaca as Dsp knew her—well, nearly—from the fumbling student days to *The Glorious Withness* to the inevitable *Unsilvering of the Mirror*, as Concubine, Companion, Comforter, Competitor, and Combatant.

And, above all, *you know the language*: The complex twists of Old High Thefarien are to you as a Muttersprache, each click and buzz, every last daunting ellipsis, all honorific inversions immediately apprehended; never would you be given pause by the most complicated inscription, not even

ITA TOIA ICAC, HERAO AÇVA VATIEXE
UNIAL, ASTRES OEOIASA OEX OUTA
OEFARIEI VELIANAS SAL CLUVIENAS.
TURUCE OUNISTAS OUVAS TAOERESCA.

[1] This Preliminary Statement is preserved almost *in toto* as a memorial to PrePraxian rhetoric. Post-1987 Statements have been, or will be, severely cut.

ILACVE TULERASE NAC CI AVIL XURVAR TEÇIAMEITALE, ILACVE ALÇASE. NAC ATRANES ZILACAL SELEITALA AXNAÇVERS ITANIM, HERAMVE AVIL ENIACA PULUMXVA.

—with your linguistic expertise, you could render that text into accurate colloquial English in a moment.

Awed by your knowledge—geography, architecture, politics, literature, sociology, music, biography, surgery, language, *everything*—I salute you on the threshold of your *Uttermost Grand Exhibition* of your *Achievements*, which is to say your *Terminal Praxis*. You Know It All, and I could, at this very instant, ask you *anything*—even, say, the tastes in bed–tapestry among the middle ranks of the Imperial Service in Spring$_2$, XV/573—in full confidence of receiving an exhaustively accurate answer.

And yet, there is more, much more, to a *Terminal Praxis* than mere exhaustive accuracy. *Synthesis*, that's the ticket—the ability to fare afield, culling the errant facts, then put them together in a meaningful and pleasing structure. Would I be Doing The Right Thing, would I be Fulfilling My Pedagogical Function, if I neglected, at this next–to–the–last moment when myriads upon myriads of details jostle for your attention, to focus your next four days of thought on Points of Pertinence? Were it not possible that, without proper admonition on my part, you might spend one of those precious days on such a marginal investigation as (to take an unthinkable instance) the abortive fortunes of *The Mauve Wyvern Mime Troupe & Domestic Plumbing Contraction Firm*—I apologize for the awkward translation—that came to such grief in its ill–advised production of Dsp's lubricious *Wallowplay* ΘUPL-ΘAL [*Grease Trap*] at *The Quinquennial Transmittal Liturgy and Communal Mock* on *The Esplanade* at Brummagem in Summer$_2$, XV/599? Might it not chance that, failing my counsel and specificity, valuable hours might be wasted in filling in gaps on the lamentably insufficient map—in spotting, say, *The Hideous Hamlet of* HERAMVE (important though it was to the *Nellies* for a few months in XV/612), or in plotting the random, temporary hiccoughs of HIA/TUS as it pocked the *Great Roads* from *Palace* to *Palace*, or in scouting those curious fluctuation in the bounds of the the *Fecund Enclosures*, bounds whose very indeterminacy led to the failure of the farfel crop and thus to the so–called *"Food War"* of XV/595? Could not some overly enthusiastic soul, mistaking my silence for a cue, down her/his available time twiddling at the messy impedimenta of *The Highly Secret History*, that grossly exaggerated and exaggeratedly gross account of a fledgling *Stye–Master*'s erotic misadventures while presumably engaged in what could only have been quite footling counterintelligence (to stretch a point) in the purlieus and banlieus of CLUS? To sum up, is it entirely outside the limits of all conjecture than my vaunted Thélèmianism, my blazoned attachment, however principled, to the ideal embodied in that beloved motto *Fay Ce Que Vouldras*, my dedication, barely this side idolatry, to APIATRUS—quintessentially Thefarien term for which no sufficient translation has, does, or will ever exist—is somewhat less than wholly devoid of the slightest loophole through which the least wary tyro *Praxist* might squeeze into the rank verdancy of [shudder!] *Triviality*?

No, No, a MAX-MOX times No. Specify I must and will. You should therefore, during the frenzied half–week between now and Saturday, devote yourself to the following areas of Res Thefarianae:

What Goes Down Must Come Up, Mostly: *Topographical Anomalies as a Guide to the Late-XV Thefarien Artistic Efflorescence*
What Goes Down Must Come Up, Mostly: *The Compulsive Lability of the Smalltime Entrepreneur in the Thefarien Economy*
What Goes Down Must Come Up, Mostly: *Table Manners in the Web of Thefarien Life*

What Goes Up Must Stay Up, Mostly: *Constellational Configurations in Thefarien Astronomology*
What Goes Over Must Come Across, Pretty Much: *The Breakdown of Courtship Practices in preRound and preCycle High Thefarie*
What Goes Sideways Must Get There, More or Less: *Patterns of Indirection in Thefarien Thought, Popular and Academic*

As I say, You Know It All. But think along the lines of the above subjects. They will supply the Long Questions on the final ex....sorry, on the *Terminal Praxis.*

Be ready—but how could you not be? Of course you're ready, set to go madly ahead, spilling forth information that is bone of your bone, flesh of your flesh. To you, experts that you are, abjectly I apologize for my pedagogue's presumption in implying, however inadvertently, that you might harbor the tiniest smidgin of self–doubt as to your performance on this Grand Trial. I can only say that I wish I were you.

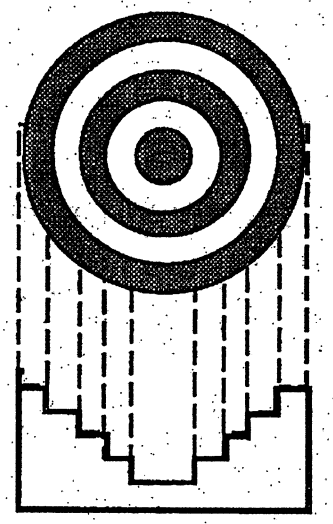
Someday, perhaps quite soon, you will understand what I mean by that.

TURCE MURILA,

[which is to say,
TINUSI SATURE]
[which is to say,
DSP]
[which is to say,
DIONYSIUS
SIMPLICISSIMUS
PERIPHRASTES][2]

2 **AKA:** Flotsam; The Tricked Cyclist; The All-Round Rounder; The Freshman Alien; The Noisome Navigator; Uncaring Bastard; The Damned Upstart Outworlder; Darling; the Reluctant Nester; Daddy; Hero of Trolltrial; Plague of Trolltrial; "Say It Ain't So, Tinusi" Sature; The Martyred Munist; Her Husband; "One-World" Tinusi; Her Ex-Husband; Master of the Inner Sty; Operator #Z-5; That Idiot Who Pi-ed the Catalogue; Wizard of Wormless; Swineless Sature; Operator #Z-15625; The Luckless HUYN; The Encumbered Katabatic; The Departmental Embarassment; Purveyor to Sophisticated Wordlings by Appointment Only; Sal's Friend What's-Her-Name; Municlet the Wanton; The Reverend Mister Fester; Who He?; Who She?; Who It?; He-Whose-Reach-Doth-Exceed-His-Grasp; Heramve-Born the Horny; That Dirty Young Man; Spineless Sature; "Take Advantage of Me, Please" Tinusi; Bankruptcy Contestee #Z-3125 (Clus); Dear; Magister Gregis; Hortensia, Meliaca, and a host of other roles; "What's-He-Doing-On-A-Stage" Sature; Corruptor of the Young; Felon #Z-125 (Clus); Dear Parent; Dad; Inductee #Z-78125; Sature, T. Flasher 2/C, #39065; Mama, What's That Man Doing?; Watcher; Our Illustrious Guest This Evening; Impresario, Manager and Sole Proprietor; That Dirty Middle-Aged Man; The Defendant; Popsy; Fumblefingers; "Shaky Pentacle" Sature; The Fixit Mag; Her Relict; Apprentice Gamester; WageSlave Grade #2; The Mole in the Ministry; LukeLips Tinusi, Master of the *Meddix*; Pentathletic Paragon; Corruptor of the Aged; Who Shall Be Nameless; The Searcher Beyond Order; The Mess; Tree-Dwarfing King of Ribbir; Warrant Gardener to the Royal See; Mindless Sature; Anathema; Afterword; Granfer the Tale Teller; Ol' Blood-and-Bile; Ol' Scourge-Bitch; Ol' Tight-Culottes; Apprentice Plumber; Architect of The Grand Design; National Disaster; The Utterly Obliterated; The Last Resort; Honey; Spinner; The RoundOff SoundOff; Good Riddance; and others too numerous--and unimportant--to list here.

[*Addition 1993:* Oops. What's this? Yet another page?
Another caveat from Early Times. I should keep it; it might be useful. But not in the text intended for COLOR CHI SANNI—Those Who Know, who are VOI CHI SAPETE—*You* Who Know. What to do?
Oh, I know; I'll put it in a footnote.[3]]



[Merely a space-filler. Disregard.]

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[3]SUPPLEMENTARY CAVEAT: Inasmuch as it is stupefyingly possible, even at this late date, that what is to be done on the **Praxis** may be misconstrued, let me put it, much as I hate to, as baldly as I can:

You have been supplied with a number of odd items composed by one ϑsp, presumably in reference to his stay in High Thefarie. These relate to each other—somehow—but by no means constitute a full presentation of that marvelous, if rather limited, Other-world. The Necessary Fiction, however, is that you know EVERYTHING about the place—which, put crassly, means that you will MAKE UP most of the information that you will hereinafter set down. Not at random, of course. You will have thought the matter over, and tried to make the sparse—well, relatively sparse—items fit together. But, on the **Praxis**, you will have to engage in INVENTION and CREATION, since ϑsp has been quite chary with hard evidence thereto pertaining, and has only capriciously divagated into the systematic, the *Tentative Chronology* notwithstanding. What should emerge, then, is a COLLABORATION between ϑsp and you. You must try hard not to contradict him; you must try equally hard, or even harder, to demonstrate the Staggering Fecundity of Your Own Creativity—without, of course, becoming so wild that you orbit; a tendency to which DSP's fixed points will, I trust, furnish a check.

Another check, or at least a guideline, is furnished by the works you have read and thought about in the course of the course. Of course. You have seen a wide variety of very competent authors go about the building of Otherworlds. If nothing else, they have shown you how to perform with some savoir-faire. This is important, because the statements you make in the **Praxis** will be judged, on some level, as *Artistic Creations*: How inventive are they? How various are they? How do they fit together? How do they show what you know? How do they take DSP's dross and transmute it into gold? Madness, Divine Madness, *Demiurgic* Madness is asked for...but with Method.

The Questions—yes, Virginia, there will be choices—will be QUITE specific [I refer you to the accumlated Questions of the past scattered about the book], and specificity will be required in your answers, which means that you will have to Create Under Pressure. The inscription on pp. 71-72 of this final handout [i.e., of 1987] and your translation of it will necessarily be a VERY important item, so be thinking it over; do not, however, finalize your version. It will mean, of course, what you want it to mean, but your wants will be subject to a Question's requirements. In this connection, let me free you from the meanings assigned to the words in the Praxis of 1985 [Item 27 in the booklet], if you wish, but there are three little words whose meanings must stand: ΘΥΤΛ, ΘΕΓΛΡΙΕΙ, ΕΝΙΛΣΛ.

As demonstrated in the booklet, Long Questions, of which you will choose ONE, will be drawn from the areas specified above on pp. 68-69; Short Identification Questions will be lists of items you have never seen before. Long Questions will provide additional information, quite a bit of it; ergo, however elaborate your investigations will have been, you will have to adapt to circumstances, Which is possibly the great lesson of Parageography.

In your time of trial and ultimate effort, this be your motto:

ULISSE NON GIASONE

Be an Odysseus, not a Jason

Selections From

ANSWERS TO HARD QUESTIONS

A Service For The Curious

Where He Can't Hurt Anyone

Q. Is it true that **Tinusi Sature**, architect of the infamous **Gardens of Barok** and still under an interdict for his disgusting role in the **War Between the Sexes**, is now allowed to roam free? And, worse, is gainfully employed in a public–interface vocation? And, worse yet, is on the government payroll?

—Concerned Reactionary, Bolsena East

A. The notorious Sature, sincerely repentant for his crimes, has been declared a Hard Case by the Ministry of Recidivism, and thus excluded from all preferment, aid, or housing. However, it was felt that he should be kept from being a drain on the public weal, and he has thus been placed, forcibly, in a plumbing apprenticeship in Bolsena, under the strict supervision of a privately funded program run by the rigorously disciplinarian Brotherhood of Moï. His movement is restricted, his disgrace is utter, and no further trouble is foreseen from this quarter.

Wrong Reference

Q. I recently completed an involuntary coracle-quest down the River **Wormless**, from source to delta, and was surprised to that there is no government monument, not even a plaque, commemorating the Battle of the same name. What is the reason for this oversight? Should not every victory of the Forces of Niceness be duly noted to inspire the young? Does history count for nothing?

—Distressed Patriot, Enphurli

A. You are under a misapprehension: The Battle of Wormless is not named from the River, but the catalogue rubric in the Grand Library and SnacBar at Arkhiv, where, late in Winter$_2$, 583 of this Cycle, a crazed band of kobolds was turned back from the Reference Room by the heroic intervention of a subsublibrarian whose name has been Lost/Deleted/Terminally Mislaid. The Battle is commemorated to this day by a rather touching ritual: a two–hour delay in the filling of any and all book requests in the Grand Library.

Bargain Baseness

Q. I am at present recuperating from my trip to the **Curious City of Mog**, where I participated in the **SesquiQuinquennial Sale**. I am, not unnaturally, curious myself as to the reasons for the existence, and even more for the persistence, of such a bloodthirsty ritual in our Enlightened Despotism. Incidentally, my chances are rated Quite Good—I have recently been moved to the Critical List—though the barb wounds in my side fester, producing an ugly discharge that resists medication... But enough of that: Why is such a barbarous procedure permitted?

—Consumed Consumer, Vei

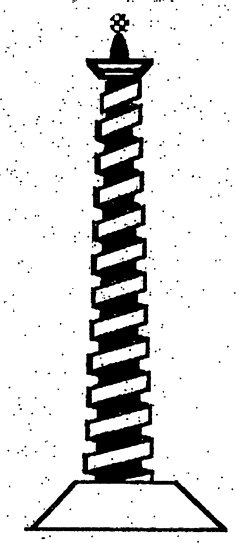
A. The Sale at Mog, relatively late as Ritual Institutions Go, is held to recall the Creation of Our Country, when the Primal Lands around Lake Seemly were deeded to the God Culçanç by Tarχi the Trickster for a ridiculous sum. The violence, of course, represents Culçanç's almost comical frustration on finding the true nature of his purchase; his fangs were, in fact, barbed. Good Luck in your Time of Travail; should you pull through, you will be one of a very select group.

High–Calorie Diet

Q. What is in the capsule perched precariously on top of that dizzyingly lofty structure **Lonespire** in the Wilds around **Mt. Trolltrial**?

—Dedicated Tourist, Enphurli

A. Two points to begin with: 1. It is not perched precariously; the orichalc capsule is, according to the best intelligence available from the Ministry of Structure, welded to the Spire. 2. Lonespire is not *"dizzyingly lofty," as you term it; a spokesman for the Ministry points out that it is a mere four storeys tall, well within the permitted limit for buildings. As to the answer to your question: A half-eaten thoat-cheese sandwich.*



Many A Slip

Q. I am slated to enter on a LifeChange in a pair of pents at the latest, and I am confused as to my costumes. All the other lads in my gang advise particolored culottes for the Swearing-At, but I seem to have read somewhere that any bifurcated covering of the nether extremities sends a signal that may be misinterpreted by the smoother elements and lead a *macho* mother, such as myself, into serious danger. What should I wear? Please hurry your reply.

—Authentic Male, Clus

A. Your little friends are mistaken. They are afflicted with the cynicism of the age, which would blur the accurate delineation of sexual roles on which our country's stability depends. For a Swearing-At, crinolines are the traditional male costume—in fact, the only *male costume. Your apprehensions are right; should you present yourself to the Swearers in such garish garb as* culottes*—all right for a war, perhaps, or an orgy—you would be handed over to the Smoothies and ravaged most painfully. So: Procure a new set, both of crinolines in various pastel shades, and of men friends.*

Monstrous Inquiry

Q. What is a **Wyvern**? What does it eat? Where can I get one for a pet?

—Anxious Juvenile, Cer–by–the–Sea

A. The Ministry of Teratology's official position on Wyverns is: There are no such things. They eat Anxious Juveniles. Come to the Ministry's pently Wyvern-Sale. Bring a collar and a long leash.

Identification Lists from the Terminal Praxis, 1987

Dare the Guide confess that he was, at setting this section, somewhat nonplussed? He had, over the last years, acquired more locales, buildings, proverbs, persons, professions, publications, events, and odd geographical anomalies than he could possibly use; besides, he hates to repeat himself. But still, what else was there? And then the lightning hit, and he cried:

A.1: GROUPS

High Thefariens, of course, were gregarious if not exactly *clubbable*. They hated, in fact, to be alone, and were constantly arranging and rearranging themselves in a bewildering variety of organizations, combinations, associations, societies, sodalities, fellowships, bodies, guilds, cliques, claques, juntas, conjuntos, companies, teams, gangs, clans, coteries, sets, sects, circles, bands, and bunches—each with its own logo, worn in the customary spot of qualified concealment, the left armpit of the overjerkin.

Below are listed ten of the best-recorded—and hence most important—groups, official and private, of late XV. Choose **THREE (3)**. Locate each in space and time, describe its purpose, personnel, and history in those confusing last years of the Cycle/Round, and reproduce its logo.

1. Fiveplay
2. The Blunt Instruments
3. PentRant[1]
4. Shipmates/Shopmates/Shapemates
5. Cahoots
6. The Fellowship of the Wrongs
7. The Abbots of Fufluns
8. The EverSideways Study Group and Networking Hookup
9. The Worthy Associates
10. In Good Standing

B. MICROMAPS

You know, of course, the topography and geography of High Thefarie much better than the inept cartographer whose fumbling, ill-conceived, loophole-pocked, and desperately incomplete map constituted your introduction to this marvelous land, and the following question is intended to test that knowledge:

On the page following the next, neatly framed, are three enlargements **(A-C)** from a much better map, showing in detail, but without names, important places barely or not at all indicated on that sorry first chart. Preceding them is a list of ten titles **(1-10)** of famous Thefarien time/space constructs,[2] which include the proper names to be applied to A, B, and C. Select **TWO** of the enlargements. Apply to each its proper name from the lists, and then proceed to: Locate it on the initial map (by reference to close named points thereon), identify and date the famous happening[3]—the reason this place is remembered, for good or ill—and then proceed to show, by reference to the enlarged map and, if applicable, the initial map, the interplay between landscape and event.[4]

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[1] Do not confuse this with *PantRent*, the established & unified nethertailors' guild/cremation society/threadsource.

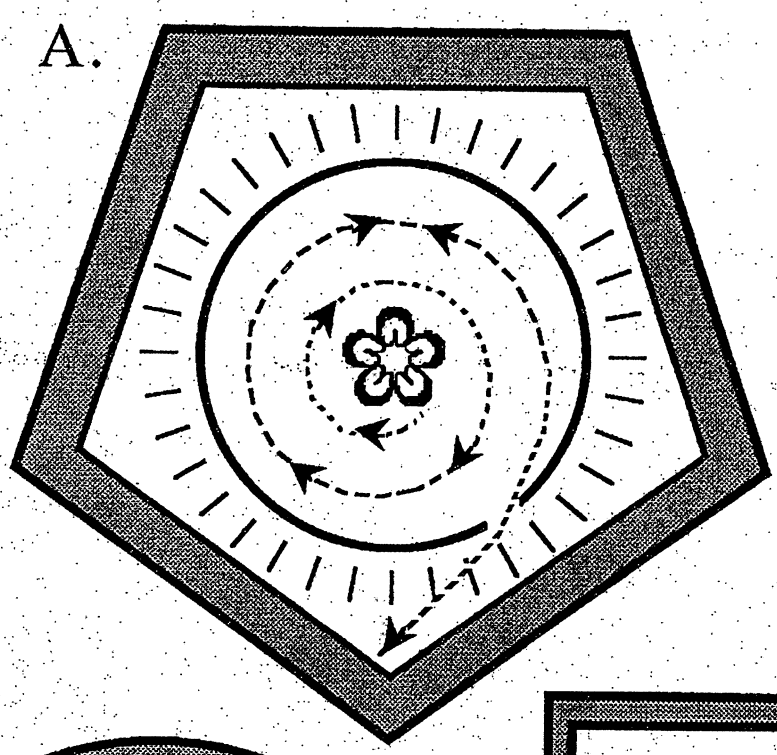
[2] Which is to say: Places associated with important events that happened therein [or -on, or -about] at a given time.

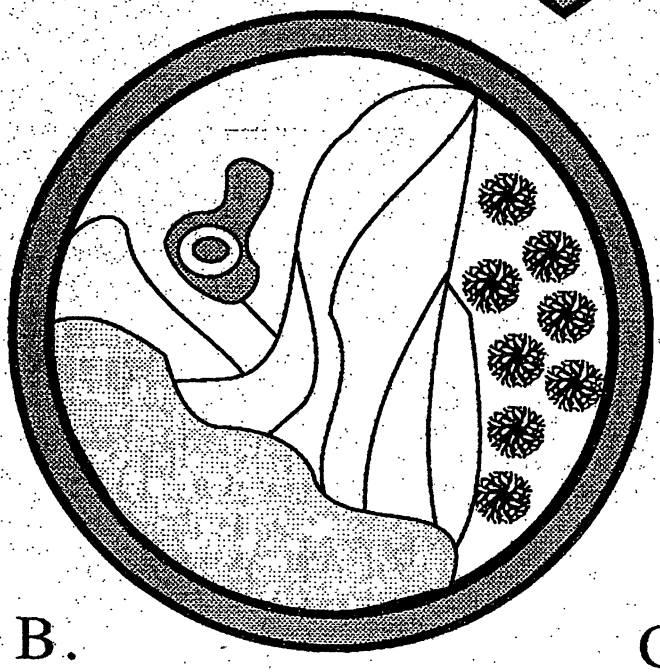
[3] The title on the list may or may not refer directly to the happening, but this really makes no difference to you, who know **everything** about the place.

[4] Be thorough but not overpowering; these are *Short Questions*.

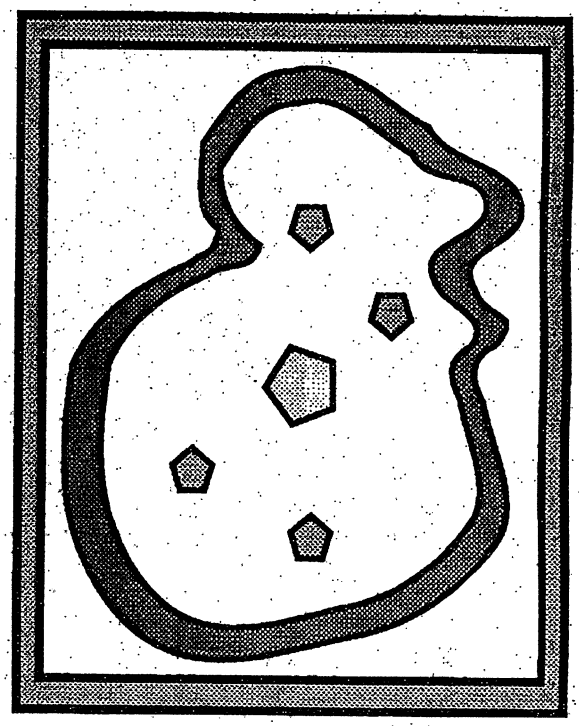
1. The Hideous Hamlet of Heramve
2. Rosehaven ManicRest
3. The Awful Abbey of Acnanaça
4. Damecorner (aka Grannycranny)
5. The Blessedly Beautiful Bourne of the Brummagem Benison[5]
6. Breakout
7. Dangley Dale
8. The Nixihelm Fens
9. Knifecourse
10. Plot of the Battle of Quincunx

A.





B.



C.

[5] Better translated "The Brummagem Idyll," but that ruins the alliteration.

LONG QUESTIONS
from the Terminal Praxis, 1987

I. Humanity, of course, is One in its well-nigh incessant use of the phrase, "Pardon me,"—and Many in its choice of circumstances that determine that use. How like the denizens—near–human, let us say—of High Thefarie, who utter their equivalent, the apotropaic apostrophe "Prastnaç lavicsla!"[1] hundreds of times a day, but in such a confusing multifariousness of circumstances that even native Thefariens frequently counter the ritual pronouncement with what has become a bewildered ritual on its own: "Çporcl nu?"—which might be rendered, "What did he/she/it mean by that?"[2] Consider: "Prastnaç lavicsla!" is the exclamation of choice when a Thefarien, in the course of the daily round, has just performed such differing activities as:

1) Shaking the elbow of a collateral maternal "uncle";
2) Returning a compliment concerning the attractiveness of linen clothing worn above the waist;
3) Coming upon a Civil Counsellor of the eighth rank or above engaged in fingering the scar which signals full removal of the parepididymis;
4) Running a small child through with a defective ticklestick;
5) Being compelled to stop a Threeday constitutional tarntla by the way-blocking presence of a street band [but not of a choir];
6) Praying to Fupluns [but not to Culcanç] in the presence of foreigners, abbots, or tentmakers;
7] Dentisuction [but not crepitation] in the presence of anyone;
8] Commencing a death–rattle.

Confusing as this might seem, it is child's play when compared with the small sins that may be, and constantly are, committed during the simplest meal. When the meal in question is a festal feast—say, the celebration of a famous victory—with its compulsive variegation of foodtypes, even the most skilled diner must keep up such a running fire of "Prastnaç's" that it is a wonder that any eating gets done at all. Thefarien foods are divided into at least 125 classes depending on their viscosity, texture, shape, size, color–rank, provenience, and preparation [live? dead? raw? boiled? broiled? hung? buried? pummelled?], location on the trencher, order in the meal, and decoration; each class is to be attacked—there is no better word for it—in a different fashion; the rank of the would be diner is also taken into account. Infractions, then, are many, and their punishment severe...if the stain [so to speak] is not wiped away by the diner's pronouncement of the ritual penance. One should remember, however, that a "Prastnaç lavicsla!" pronounced without need is the worst sin of all. It is not surprising, then, that one theory on the cause for Dsp's First Public Disgrace is that it was not engendered by his hideous wastefulness of personnel on the battlefield, but by his performance at the Grand Celebratory Banquet for the Victor of Trolltrial, where he was Guest of Honor for about three minutes and twenty seconds.

> Give the menu, or at least a good part of it, for that Grand Banquet in Enphurli in Spring1, 580. Classify a sampling of the items, and show how Dsp managed his alienation of all The Powers That Be in the highest of High Thefarien society. Some discussion of the sheer physical difficulty of correct eating might add to the effect of your answer.

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[1] Literally, it runs more or less like this: "Mayest–thy-exaltedness-be-gracious-to–avoid–in–perpetuity [*honorific more-vivid persistent future optative imperative, 2nd person abstract singular*] by-this–defilement-repeated–miserable-me–hence." Archaic, but effective.

[2] This translation is actually quite free; the close rendering is best left in the transparent vestment of DSP's *Lexicon Thefarienum–Latinum*, and even his version—"Quo malum verpa ista inarrecta versa?"—while accurate enough in particulars, fails to catch the air of well-bred disgust.

II. Nothing, of course, lasts...especially a small business. Not even in a managed paradise of expectational equilibrium like High Thefarie, where The Board of Magi grumble and mutter their spells long and low to ensure the continued existence of that most precarious of all classes, the *Lesser Entrepreneurs*. It must be admitted that the Board's success, if limited, is nonetheless firm: If they cannot secure the small tradesman against all [or indeed most] failure, they can still mouth their mumbo–jumbo with sufficient expertise to damp the extremes of the cyclic curves to prevent, say, the vetchmonger from the incurral of such damning losses that he gives over, disheartened, from monging that vetch upon which the nation's weal depends—and, contrariwise, from the attainment of such a corner on vetch–futures that he upsets the market and leaves. It is not a simple system, and consumes a great number of eyes of newt and toes of frog, but it works somehow. Business is Magic, after all....But Magic is Business, too, a fact which The Board had forgotten, if it ever knew, until **ðsp**, a failed, no, an *ejected* apprentice, set up on his own in 602. He failed, of course, and quite quickly, though he might have lasted a bit longer in the absence of the withering volleys of spells and minor plagues that proceeded from the terrified Board, who drove him out of *The City of the Magus* and brought about his utter ruin in *Mog*. Not that he would have succeeded, in any case. His small–bore *Accounting* practice was too bizarre, his lust for *Diversification* too intense, his conception of *Market Research* too minimal to last the year out. And *Inventory Management*? One might say that it was *Inventory* that laid him low, low, and lower than that.

> Analyze **ðsp**'s disastrous foray into Entrepreneurial Magic in 602. Assign specific reasons (exclusive of The Board's war of sorcery) for his business's collapse, including the analysis of a sampling from the records impounded at his bankruptcy hearing. Do not be easy on him.

III. Stars, of course, have been our great indicators of cosmic order. Their regular, measured procession across the sky, their observable generation of pattern, their persistence in fixed configurations—all these have brought their intimations of Something Else. If they have produced astrological flummery, they have also been the origins of Science to us. To us—but not to the High Thefariens. Their planet, if that is the word for it, seems to have been in the center of a very idiosyncratic cluster: The night sky presented itself to them as, not a varied series of different items which first hinted at, and then declared the existence of, small orders that betokened one great order, but an *absolutely unbroken* network of linked regular pentagons, all of the same size, each indistinguishable from the other. It was like being surrounded by a rather dull wallpaper...and about as conducive to the rise of Science. Until, of course, That Night in Spring$_2$, XV/573, The Time of the Great Unlinking, when the network fell apart into a, well, a *mess*, a *chaos* of non–regular, non-geometrical shapes—but shapes that, paradoxically, *stayed together*. For nearly the rest of that Century, star– and constellation–naming was the great national sport, helped along [so to speak] by the fact that the groupings, on inspection, proved to be almost idiotically graphic representations of common, and indeed rather lowly, household items. This promoted agreement on the names, but did very little to foster a sense of either mystery or influences. To be born under the Sign of *The Comb*—what wonder in *that*? It was nearly Cyclend before some anonymous watcher deciphered *The Message* contained in those homely items, *The Message* that showed, beyond all doubt, that there was indeed Something Out There. Not necessarily Something to be madly welcomed, but Something nevertheless.

> Take a quarter, or rather a fifth, of the night sky—for Winter$_2$, XV/621, say—and (a) show the Homely Items thereto depicted; then (b) demonstrate the portion of *The Message* therein contained. If time does not remain for an exhaustive treament of (b), at least tell what *The Message* was.

IV. Monopolygamy, of course, or rather Polymonogamy, is a much more *usual* practice among the Thefariens than it is with us. The remarriage, and remarriage, and remarriage, *and* remarriage of a divorced spouse is a fairly established life–pattern in that curious land...though to effect a *sixth* marriage to the same person, as Eniaca knew and DSP found out, is to flout, quite seriously, both law and convention. It might be thought that such a sequence, along about the second remarriage, would produce boredom, but

nothing is further from the truth. By the custom, Thefarien brides had to be courted quite strenuously...and the custom changed, otherwise, quite rapidly, as did the participants. ðsp, for example, married to Eniaca at age 22, remarried her at ages 32, 47, 57, 69, and 70; for all but the last, that Seditious Sixth, he found that the courtship practices had changed so drastically that nothing was the same. Nowhere is this better shown than in the "honeymoon"—an inadequate rendering of the Thefarien term VeLχeS [= "jaunt; sojourn; junket"], which refers, quite strictly, to a *pre*nuptial trip to behold, among other things, the Wonders of Nature. The First VeLχeS, at *Clus*, was distressing enough, not to say barbarous; the Second, at *Vainvale*, involved rockclimbing, for which ðsp was desperately out of shape, and bitter repartee, for which he had never had any taste. But it was the Third [at the *Bowre*, surprisingly; he had always enjoyed the *Bowre*], when he was entering middle age, and the Fourth [at *Heramve*, of all the places in that world], when he was leaving it, that really proved traumatic. Fashions had changed, costumes had changed, Eniaca had changed, and ðsp had changed most of all. Not even the scenery could console him; to him these "honeymoons" were, as to so many untutored first–time grooms, unqualified disasters. His father never told him. Of course.

> Compare the Third and Fourth "honeymoons" of Eniaca and ðsp, the enervating Third and the exhausting Fourth. Take into particular account the distressing interaction of the respective landscapes, the ridiculous (Third) and uncom-fortable (Fourth) costumes, the squalid (both) accommodations, and the general insufficiency of the Standard Prenuptial Agreement. Be indulgent.

V. Art, of course, is a treatment of experience, of *salient* experience, and it is thus no great wonder that Late–XV Thefarien painting, glorious as it appears, is nevertheless shot through with an overpowering *apprehension*, most obviously seen in the omnipresence of a single *viewpoint*: the artist, whoever he may be, whatever his subject, is always looking *down from above*. It takes no very perceptive critic to see in this the influence of the standard physical, and hence mental, stance of the Years of Anxiety: the position high atop the country's eastern borders, looking down at steppe, or waste, or blank, and wondering what evil will turn up, will burst forth soaring and grasping from the center of a most displeasing prospect, where everything is, doubtless, vile. The technical brilliance of *The Movement*, or rather *The Movements*, was staggering, as was the sheer amount of top–quality encaustics and sinistrals[3]; but the Fear that had impelled such an efflorescence infected even the blandest canvases and chestpieces. Even primitive juvenile portraits reveal, on inspection, as from far–away–down–there, the sly smile, the Snollygoster lurking behind the innocent eyes. And, in all the paintings of the various sophisticated Schools, the protean Terror twists and turns and teaches, while it learns, the shapes of the Uncanny Below.

> Survey the effect on Late–XV "painting" of The Baleful View From The Heights by describing and analyzing THREE (3) paintings from as many different schools. I would suggest that you might pick from the following: for Schlockscape, Nacnuva's "Rise In Triumph"; for Neo-Graphicism, Marcar's "Look Behind You, Slowly"; for Super–Similitudinism, Arnthal's "Kobold Ascending the Stairs"; for Sub–Nostalgic Passivism, Nunθenθ's "View of the Horizon Shrine"; and for Brute Involvemental Assaultism, Eniaca's "Out of the Picture Plane"...but use other examples, and other Schools, if you wish. Any and all will illustrate the point. To illustrate the illustrations, sketches would be nice, but are by no means necessary.

VI. Directness, of course, is a Thing We Value. Directness, and Spareness, and Neatness. We are the lovers of the Elegant Solution, the Quickest Way There, the Most Economical Hypothesis. "Less Is More," we say, and mean it, or hope we do. Not so the High Thefariens, to whom the workings of ***HIA/TUS*** have made the statement, "You can't get there from here," not the punchline of an old joke, but the statement of a universal truth: To go from point A to a desired point B in High Thefarie, one must, willy–nilly, pass

[3] Left-handed paintings; a curious but symptomatic development of the time, much more widespread than, to take an even stranger "genre," *aristerorhinals*, where the brush, or spatula, or fork, was secured in the "painter's" left nostril.

through point Q, or X, or Z. "Go round about," said the Great Boyg to Peer Gynt in Ibsen's fantastic play—and the Boyg, if not Peer, would be quite at Home in High Thefarie. There, *Indirection* is the thing, and not just in journeying. In Reasoning: Where we have Logic, they have Embellishment; where we prize Dialectic, they honor Rigmarole. In Relationships: We declare Intimacy by letting down the bars and baffles that obscure a Straight Shot at the Truth About Ourselves; they erect, for new loves, more and more elaborately spiralling arabesques between the Others and the Inner Them. In Landscape Gardening: We chisel uniform flower-beds to structure an already small space; they spread out mazes that lead, confusingly, to nowhere in particular. In general: We aim at Results and Attainment; they foster Process and Getting Along, Sort Of. If Ideals were to be summed up in body parts, ours would be the human gullet; theirs, the pig's tail. We should thus not be surprised at the presence and effect of this thought–pattern in nearly every area of the Thefarien Experience.

And so, demonstrate the triumph of Indirection in High Thefarie as it is encountered in THREE (3) of the following areas:
(1) The measurement of time, especially daily time;
(2) the giving of a final examination, or, as they term it, Terminal Praxis;
(3) the structure of a popular tune;
(4) making sausage;
(5) a model begging–letter;
(6) Fall, fashions for men, XV/600;
(7) building a honeymoon cottage for two;
(8) choosing a new totemic ruler for the country;
(9) winning the Battle of Horizon Ridge.[4]

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[4] Help! I am a prisoner in a footnote factory. I've taken this rather weird route to communicate my plight with some confidence of success—they don't read my stuff, they really don't, at least not since they perpetrated the notes to HT 21; all they're interested in is volume—because I've got to do *something*. I don't think I have any hope of getting out of here, wherever *here* is; the only light comes from the screen of the SE, and, chained as I am, I can't make out the walls. But I might, I just might, be able to help you. Let me put it briefly: That man—that *Thing*—that postures before you thrice weekly, claiming to be Dsp, well, *It*'s not me. *It*'s a clone, and a bad one at that: *It*'s only half my weight, for one thing; The Management, however megalomaniac its aims, is running on a tight budget. Anyway, *It* stands there, and digresses the way I used to, and smiles the way I used to, but Don't You Believe *It*. *It*'s the Smyler Wyth The Knyf Under The Levis; *It* can smile and smile and be a villain. What *It* wants, and what they want, is to do to you what they've done to me: To get you into that Praxis-room in mid-December, and then spirit you off suddenly, without trace, to a number of holes like this, chain you to a batter Macintosh, and force you (oh! the pain!) to turn out settings for all sorts of cheap fiction. Enslaved imaginations, that's what you'll be, individually and collectively, if they have their way. So here's the plan: Your only way to them is through *It*. Therefore, hassle *It*. Take nothing *It* says for granted. Question *It* closely; does *It* really know what *It*'s talking about? Make *Its* life hell. And the best way to do that , oddly enough, is to gross them out, so to speak. *It* and they are really straight–arrow in matters of speculative fiction; they pretend, but they can't really stand the wilder flights of fancy. Ergo: When you get to creating, really give them, and *It*, a rough time. Be wild. Send your imaginations off madly Into The Blue Beyond—being thoroughly based in research and all that, of course. If you frighten them enough with your creations, they won't dare mess with you. And keep an eye out for a locked underground room on Campus; I can just hear the bells. But save yourselves first: Down with *It* and them!!! Dsp

EPILOGUE[1]
to Version 2.2 (1988)

Epilogue is a stupid word in this context. *Afterword*, maybe. *Postscript*, possibly. *Addendum*, perhaps. But not *Epilogue*. *Plays* have *Epilogues*. *Prose Narratives* have *Epilogues*. I don't know, conceivably *Connected Autobiographical Memoirs* have *Epilogues*. But random collections of bits and pieces put together in no order to speak of, even if they constitute the flotsam of a single life, **These Do Not Have Epilogues.**

Epilogues tell how Things Turned Out. This section, whatever it is, does not do *that*. Its aims are future, not past. It will contain—if I can bear to write it (and I know I'd better)—*Lists*, Lists of Items That Are Being Deciphered, Lists of People and Places That Ought To Be Known, Lists of Indices That Are On The Block, which is to say Lists of *Lists*. Now, something that does that Is Not An *Epilogue*.

Stupid word. But don't blame *me*. It's not *my* idea.

Better get to it, I guess.

Items That Are Being Deciphered

A scene or so of *Grease Trap*
A chain love letter
Three parking tickets for a thoat
[from Clus, by the look of them]
DSP's not-quite-famous Last Words
Scattered Encyclopedia Entries
A first-person account of the unpleasantness attendant upon the only Möbium Pinacophanic Extravaganza ever held
Directions for assembling and playing the Mectub
Two menus, heavily stained
A calligraphy sample
A standard Pre-Nuptial$_3$ Contract
Two star charts
A fistful of rather limp lyrics
Assorted reviews
Impressionistic translations of intimate conversations
Seven labels, of assorted provenience
Chapter 25 of *A Kobold/Thefarien PhraseBook*: Mortuary Games

People That Ought To Be Known

Joy Matin
The Bellman & The Bileman [what a team!]
Cortia Genannt
The Personnel of all the Groups in HT 37
Noçe Tipsu
Rutger M^{C}Grubnik [a pseudonym, of course]
Bink the Banker
Dimtra Tennewaugh, D.T.
Donu Prn
Cnaceboc Zldi, Master of Mistresses

Places That Ought To Be Known

The mapped places in HT 37
The unmapped places in HT 37

Indices That Are On The Block

Documents, etc., found in the Corpus
Gods, ditto
Places, ditto
Proverbs, Sayings, ditto
Events, etc., found in the Corpus
Persons, ditto
Positions, ditto
Thefarien Terms, both in the Corpus and out

So. Enough to be getting on with. Damn country has gotten out of hand. Better I should have stayed home. Not that I had any choice then. Or now. But *not* an *Epilogue*. Stupid word. Stupid, stupid, stupid....

Sigh.

dsp

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[1] [*Addition 1993*: The above plaint is preserved, not only for the standard masochistic reasons—look how much *ought* to have been done!—but because it contains substantive materials not otherwise yet in the official record.]

The RoseHaven Reflection

if all else fails then read the directions

my goodness me its sunny out here

button rosebud butterfly dagger and footprint
button rosebud butterfly dagger and footprint

no thanks i m fine my milks warm enough
and my blanket is tucked in niiice and comfy

button rosebud butterfly dagger and footprint
button rosebud butterfly dagger and footprint

oh its sweet of you to ask but this book suits me
right down to the ground especially the part where
the hero takes to his room with a bout of the megrims

button rosebud butterfly dagger and footprint
button rosebud butterfly dagger and footprint

can it be playtime already oh darn just when i was getting
to the obligatory bondage bit i find the description of the knots
quite salubrious and arousing if you know what i mean it goes
over and under double back and around and down until it forms

button
rosebud
butterfly
dagger and
footprintttt

thanks i needed that though if you wouldnt mind
a laypersons opinion not a complaint of course
you didnt have to lay on with such a will i mean
the wounds will be some time healing and my wifes
set to inspect on fourday
you say shes been here

oh

button rosebud butterfly dagger and footprint
button rosebud butterfly dagger and footprint

It was the only job I could find, that dreadful Libration after the Fourth **DISGRACE**. No skl, no exp reqd, and the pay was surprisingly good. I'd kept away from exotic wildlife for years after QuinQuest, and with good reason, but these were hatchlings, no more than ten days old, so what could they possibly do?—and besides, I'd be wearing full protection, gauntlets, greaves, visored helmet, mailsuit, breastplate, the lot. Why the nobility had such a thing for breeding those revolting things was more than I could say, or can say yet, but, what the hell, I'd raised a family on their foibles, and one more indignity wasn't going to kill me...or so I thought. Something more for the resumé: SUTRELA CI ÇACVAR—Dragon Sexer, 3rd Class. Good for a poem, maybe, when I got the time.

I mean, the given is inherently ridiculous. Dragons, or ÇACVARNA, occur in five sexes. That's right, *five*: Female, Femling, Male, Paramale, and Freemartin. In order to breed these disgusting creatures, *all* sexes are necessary. Which means that the dealer's hatchlings must have their sexes determined, and be boxed into pents, quite early, since they become utterly untransportable—not just to the consumer, but to *anywhere*—after the age of 25 days. Which is where the SUTRELA, or Sexer, comes in. It is his unlovely function to determine the sex of these little horrors and match them into sets before they reach the age of five days, so that they can be shipped to the buyer ASAP. After that, it's *caveat emptor* all the way.

I sat on a stool in this pentparlor, see, with torches flaring, five colorcoded small empty baskets on the floor beside me, and one huge basket, full of wriggling squamoids, before me. My job was simplicity itself: Pick one up, turn it over, squint at the inchoative private parts [oh, what a term!], determine the sex, and chuck the observed dragonling into the appropriate basket. Nothing to it. A child could do it.

I gulped, reached into the big basket with my gauntleted right hand, grabbed one, turned it over, and directed my reluctant gaze at its lower abdomen. For all the torches, the light wasn't at all good, but I could make out the relevant clue:

❀ —a Femling. I dropped it into the second basket on my right and drew a deep breath. Hey, that wasn't so bad. I reached for another.

Ƀ—a Butterfly, by heaven! I referred to the Key printed on my left gauntlet's wrist: that meant a Male, a True Male. First basket on the left. I reached again.

♀—hey, I might be on a run! A true Female! First on right. And now another....

†—a Paramale! Four out of four! Why did they pay so much for this work? Piece of cake. And reached again....

O, then ꕥ, then ꕥ again , then †, and then a ❀. I was working into a rhythm. Reach, grab, check, chuck. Reach, grab, check, chuck. Reach, grab, ch....

I must have been at it for a full fifteen minutes before it sank in: No ⚭ Not a ⚭ in the lot. Where were all the Freemartins? Four basketfuls, or basketsful, but the third on the left—completely empty. How could I make up the sets without Freemartins? Maybe I'd mistaken one. Let's look at those Femlings again....

❀, then ❀, and then—uh-oh. A ⚭. How could I have mistaken a ⚭ for a ❀? I slung the offending hatchling into the Freemartin basket and sat back, shaken. The light wasn't *that* bad. Not at all. Not bad enough to make me mix up a Footprint and a Rosebud. Let me see that one again. I grabbed the Freemartin and turned it over....

ꕥ! Yes, dammit, a ꕥ! A bloody *Butterfly*! A *Male*! Were my eyes going? I recited the Sexer's Litany:

> *Female, Femling, True Male, Paramale, Freemartin;*
> *Button, Rosebud, Butterfly, Dagger, and Footprint.*
> *Female, Femling, True Male, Paramale, Freemartin.*
> *Button....*

Something was very, very wrong. I looked at the Male I was holding again...

...and saw a ❀. It was a Femling again. I threw it back in the big basket, picked an established Male out of first right, and looked....

O, but it should be ꕥ. I threw *it* back in the big basket. Panicked, I redoubled my efforts, rechecking every last horrible hatchling, returning all the changelings to the common stock. One out of four, at least, was not what it had been classified as. But at least I knew what I had in the small baskets:

> *Female, Femling, True Male, Paramale...*

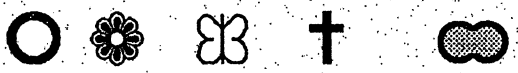
I picked up a Femling from second right, just to make one last check....

⚭.

In terror, I let my hand relax. And the whatever crawled over the wristlet on my gauntlet and down inside my protection. I slapped. It bit, hard. I ripped off the gauntlet, tried to shake it loose. It disappeared up my sleeve. I leaped up, tore off the breastplate and mailshirt, and stumbled, right into the big basket....

i could at least have turned the damned sheet over
not that the spell works every time of course but it does
bring error within the standard parameters or so they told me
afterwards

button rosebud butterfly dagger and footprint
button rosebud butterfly dagger and footprint



if all else fails then read the directions

could i have some more warm milk please

from the

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT
on the Terminal Praxis, 1988

Carissimi/ae–

I knew there wouldn't be enough time, but I hardly thought it would swoosh by like this. Yet, look at how fast it's gone : Nearly half past December already, and here we are at the final fork in the road, the last knife in the back, the ultimate spoon in the cyanide. Somewhere along the way, the whimsy died, and it's back to the all–too–Real World, with nary a clue as to how we got here so quickly.[1]

Fate wears sneakers.[2]

In other years, Your Guide perpetrated at this point a Great Gout of Rhetoric, with the primary aim of psyching the candidates up by averring that they knew all there was to be known about High Thefarie, that estimable otherworld. Even as you, Oh Best Beloved, even as you. [And what a bunch you are!] Now, however, that Gout spouts for you as Item HT 35 above, and for me to engage in such verbal antics again were a sin against time, light, and language. I shall therefore take it as read, and get to the meat of the matter, of this year's matter:

Here are the 6 [Six] areas whence the 6 [Six] Long Questions will be drawn. Be thinking along these lines[3] for the next <10 [Few] days.

Wretched Excess: *The Hypertrophy of Honorific Rhetoric as a Social Indicator in Late XV*

Wretched Excise: *Thefarien Taxation Patterns in the Microeconomy of the Waning Cycle*

Wretched Access: *The Necessary Impossibility in Architectosexual [i.e., BauHaus-Kamasutric] Prescriptions and Proscriptions among Mid-Extended Families in Exurban Enphurli During the Terror*

Rigid Duress: *Penological Variance, or, The Theory and Practice of Punishment and Imprisonment in High Thefarie throughout XV*

Rigid Recess: *Compelled Carnival/Release/Rest/Recreation/Refreshment, aka Specified Spontaneity, as a Leitmotif in Thefarien Life*

Rigid Impress: *Public Monuments and Parks as Instruments of Education and Acculturation in Late-XV High Thefarie*

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[1] Of course there are clues; I know that. Like inadvertence and procrastination. But make allowances, at this festive season of the year, for human *faiblesse*, for a tired parageographer's desire to put the best face on nearly utter disaster.

[2] Or, possibly, bedroom slippers, but that would sound trivial, which is a tic I try relentlessly to avoid. But, whatever muffled footware Fate sports, the fact that she does is to be remembered. If there are only two things that you can carry away from this course, this is the second. For the first, see the lengthy footnote on p. 73 above, towards the end.

[3] Only *along the lines*, of course. These clues—let us call them that—as can be seen at a glance, are ridiculously broad, much too open for the Longest of Long Questions and Long Answers. I wouldn't want you to write so as to conceal a Lack of Knowledge. Far from it. Tsk.

Let me remind you also, yet again, that your knowledge of the Thefarien language is to be tested to the utmost in the Long Question—*any* Long Question—and that you must, therefore, be able to translate the inscription on pp. 70-71 above. *Do Not Finalize Your Translation* until you see what the Long Questions are, and decided which one you will be answering. And keep the rest of your linguistic competence in shape; it just may be required.

That should be enough to be getting on with...except for 1 [One] Thing: Direct your thoughts also to 2 [Two] Places in High Thefarie—that fabled nowhere—one of which will be of particular importance, no matter which Long Question you choose:

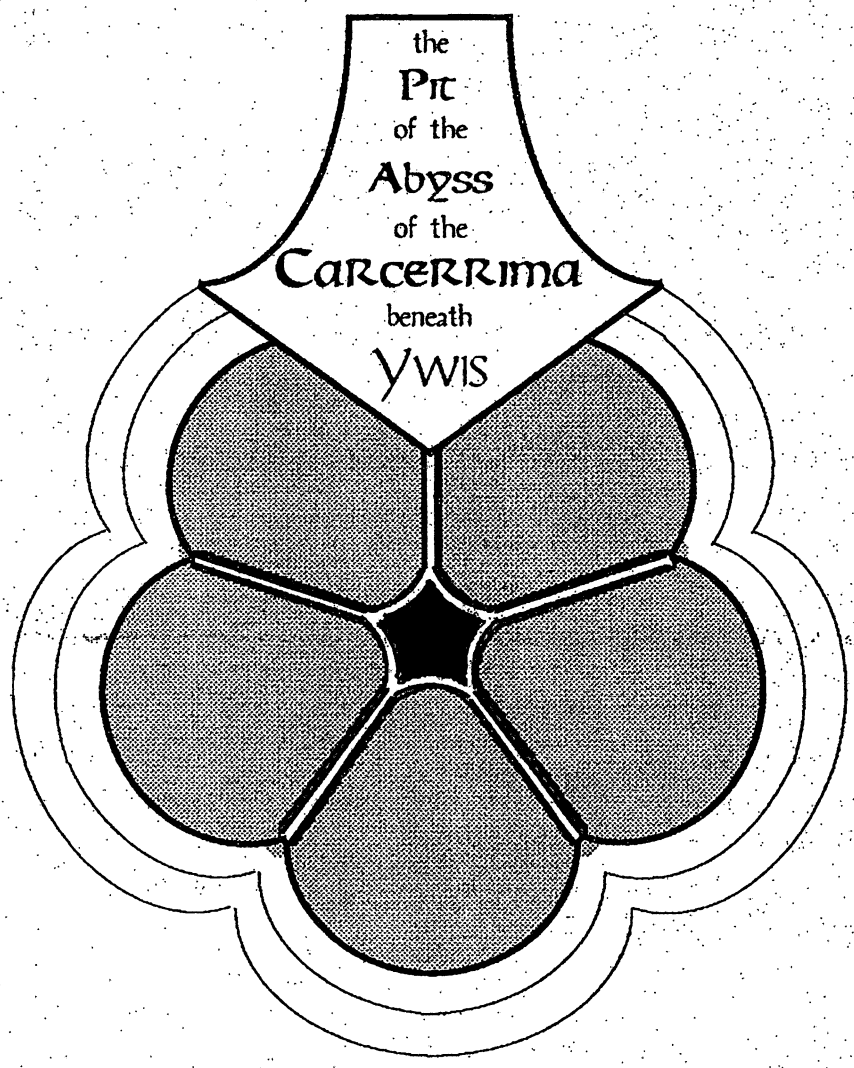
[a] The Enchanted Forest of BROSLYN

[b] The Sunken City of YWIS[4]

Zo. Here ve iss. Facing, the Others the One and the One the Others, across the probably unthinkable [and certainly unspeakable] gulfs between our various Worlds.

You will spend the next two days thinking of my World, I of yours. For now, so much to say, and no way to say it. Words fail me, utterance eludes my larynx.

I am, in short, choked up.[5]



[4] Mistakenly referred to, on early states of The Map, as Y s. Sorry about that. . . but you might recall that, however named, it is/was not strictly *on* the map. Off to the, well, the *Left*, as it were.

[5] Help! I am *still* a prisoner in a footnote factory, and the imposter who gave you this is no less the wretched clone that *It* was at the term's beginning. Why didn't you find me? Why didn't you at least call, or leave a note, or refuse to play by *Its* rules, or...oh god, here They come again.....

Identification Lists
from the Terminal Praxis, 1988

Thorny bitlings, these, where your Guide is, as in other existential impedimenta, his Own Victim, or Own Worst Enemy, or Both At Once. Since he instituted these exercises in 1982, he has acquired a staggering backlog of varia, *not to mention* obscuratiora *and* inutilitissima, *most still chafing impatiently in their insistence on insertion into the Sacred Texts. How, he would say, oh, How to Do Something Else while Doing the Same? How to avoid the Pressure of the As–Yet–Unborn? How...? And then the Tenth Muse—*Quadrata the SquaredOff, *Muse of Writing Blocks—twigged him by the ear, and he brightened and bent to his task:*

A.1: GESTURES

We RealWorlders, of course, spend most of our days in self–delusion, in the assuredness that our way of doing almost anything is *The Way It Spozed To Be Did*, and that anyone who approaches whatever–it–is in another manner is thereby less, outside our pale, which is the only pale that matters. We chop at our inner bent elbow, or hook our horns with naked index digit and pinkie, in the full confidence of Universal Comprehension; however disastrous understanding might turn out to be, we Flip Birds, slap High Fives, Bump and Grind in the knowledge that our Meaning will reach its intended recipient. So, regrettably, do/did the High Thefariens, but with a bewildering panoply of signs and gestures—digital, manual, pedal, pelvic, pectoral, you name it—that would shame the races of our Mediterranean basin into complete immobility.

Below are listed, by rough translations of their colloquial nomeclature, 12 (TWELVE) of the most important, and, as it turned out, most ominous gestures—wiggles, waggles, waves, writhings and the like, not to forget secret signs—of late XV. Choose 3 (THREE). Describe, anatomically, the production of each, define the circumstances under which it is generally employed, and indicate at least one occasion (most of these, inevitably, involved DSP, who never quite got the hang of the system, in part or whole) on which it had far-reaching consequences, generally disastrous.[1]

1. Flicking the Wyvern
2. The Negligent KneeUp
3. All Those Others
4. The Qualified Negative
5. The Wobble
6. Cool It, χΘΛÇ-Face!
7. The Wongol
8. The ShuffleOn
9. The Sky Strut
10. Sanding A Massage (*sic*)
11. The Vei VaVaVoom
12. The Busted Hanguide

A.2: ARCHITECTURAL INSCRIPTIONS

As already mentioned,[2] the Ministry of Structure's CounterBuilding Flurry of XV/608-610 had as its object the assimilation of the sudden spate of anomalous and highly untraditional structures erected during the highly unofficial baroque Building Boom of 605-608. A difficult process at best, this was complicated no end by the necessity of choosing the Five Canonical Inscriptions for each building. Nowhere can the awkwardness of the procedure seen quite so clearly as in the labelling of the Möbium, that soaring,

[1] It might be well, in this connection to remind you that the *external* anatomy of humanoid High Thefariens was, roughly, the same as ours. *Internal* supply and arrangement was, of course, another matter.

[2] In Long Question #2 of the 1986 Terminal Praxis. See above, pp. 62-63.

breathtaking tribute to the idea of the Tessaract[3] converted in early 609 to a squat and ugly Refreshment/Regrouping Hostel for Confused Travellers. Two of the Inscriptions were fixed by tradition, of course—CRI NICL "rest stop" [across the top of the façade] and ÇANÇ VO ΘRχL NINI "have a nice day, y'all" [along the walls of the exit tunnel]—but the three others proved such a pain that they were, regretfully but inevitably, made the subject of an ΛCΛBELLΛΘ, or Public Competition.

Below are listed, in jumbled order, the twelve inscriptions submitted by four of the Five Finalists.[4] Bearing in mind the requirements for the three inscriptions—

A: A welcoming motto (engraved on the lintel of the main entrance);
B: A severe yet tender admonition (centered above the steam tables in the Refectory);
C: A somewhat over-pompous message of moral uplift[5] (framed in gilt below the mirrors in the Ladies' Repair Room)—

choose, from the jumble below, the 3 (THREE) winning inscriptions, translate each, and locate it in its appropriate space in the building. Recall, while making your choices, the bittersweet outcome: The Jury members were utter strangers to irony, and it was only after two pents of public outcry that the newly installed inscriptions, those supposedly staid embodiments of state stability (brainchildren of an unnamed copyist in the Bureau itself), proved so sardonic that they had to be removed, at considerable expense.

1. TΛTÇ NΛ FETLMΛR
2. χUχUCΛÇU MΛIS RUBNCN
3. MΛTR LFTMΛ BUTÇE TΛIT
4. RITME LEPSN MEχMΛ TΛI
5. TE REΛΘE χRSPINΘ, TE SMΛIL UVΛ χRΛUΘ
6. ΛBΛS ΘUTΛ ΘEFΛRIEI
7. LEPΛTUSEMΛχUCΛLEULEPSΛNUVΛNNΛ-
   PUTRIMETU CII
8. VΛTI TLIΛ CIZ VERTΛPL
9. TRCΛ TRCΛ NU ?
10. ΛPIΛTRUS CΛΘ CΛPLNΛ
11. χZNTΛIT !!!
12. UχI VILE VELΘRE NIχNIχ[6]

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[3] A forbidden idea, by the way, in High Thefarie, a land so overridden by MEχ, or *Quintessence*, that the very concept of normal *3*-dimensional space had somehow to be inflated, at least in theory, to *5* dimensions.

[4] The Fifth Finalist, a ringer from the upper ranks [the Exalted Quint, no less!] of the Ministry itself, produced items so inept that they deserved and received no consideration at all, even by the hardly unbiased Jury.

[5] Actually, not so much "uplift" as "sideswipe", but literal translation across the unthinkable gulfs [*gulves?*] of cultural difference would serve no purpose here.

[6] Help! I am *still* a prisoner in a footnote factory! Will no one come to my aid...? Root *It* out? Frustrate ΓPΓβ? Avenge me? No one at all? Well, I'll see you soon.

LONG QUESTIONS
from the Terminal Praxis, 1988

I. The pager through these chronicles has, of course, become almost nauseatedly familiar with the rules of REXIUMUNONA, or *Specified Spontaneity*, or *Regulated Release*, that ruled the public festivals of Thefarien public life in Late XV; DSP's unerring instinct for the *faux pas* at festive gatherings has seen to that. But what these casual perusers may well have missed—there is as yet a paucity of published documentation—is the carryover of this oxymoronic tendency into *private life*. Not only did *state*-compelled carnivals splatter the five-pented ten seasons[1] of the Thefarien year, but the quotidian, the every-daily home life of your basic family unit was so studded with rigidly canonical times for commanded wildness, for freedom-by-the-numbers [as it were], that the wonder is that any work got done at all. Every day had its pockets of required recreation, of course—on many a Twoday or Fourday was DSP obliged to rush away from a struggling young business for ordered orgiastic folderol at Cahoots, or to choke down what amounted to a forcefed snack from The Brotherhood, or wearily, so wearily, to chase a kohled and bangled bacchante around a workloaded outbasket—but Fivedays were the worst by far. On Fivedays, those fifths of each pent devoted to Family Togetherness, home was the hunter, home from the hill, and so was ∂OY, constantly intermittent if not intermittently constant, ∂OY not quite unrelieved and not quite unconfined. Many a Fiveday was newly married ∂sp pleasurably sweating in the mundane necessity of ejecting the offal, or cropping the brome, or shaving the thoat, when Playtime struck, as it were, and, under the stern urging of Eniaca—traditionalist in this if in little else—he was forced to en ∂OY himself.

> Trace a typical Fiveday at the manse of ∂sp and Eniaca in the early years of a marriage[2], giving the relentlessly programmed interplay of Do and Don't, the infrangible schedule of slavery and ∂OY, that put such an intolerable strain on the already shaky relationship of outlander and native(s). Be quite specific as to the ∂OYs.

II. Governments, of course, mean Taxing, and Taxes, of course, mean Bitching, and so the world goes—*any* world. Even that Paradigmatic Paragon of Parageographical Plenitude, High Thefarie. The *Nellies*—The Council at Enphurli—would deliberate throughout every Winter_1, and enliven the subsequent intercalated festday—unofficially[3] but rightly termed WoeDay—with a list of the tariffs to be in effect for the coming year. The authority of this hereditary was as absolute as it was unappealable, but, worse than that, it was *capricious*. In the best of years [none of the 500's or 600's qualifies for that category, by the way], they were unpredictable and arbitrary in their levies; but, as Cycle XV ground to its end, their fairly irrational assessments of sumptuary payments due immediately to the coffers of ILAC RLNI SIMXASIMXASIMXA, or *UnderBureau Conjoining Contribution/Extortion/Squeezing-Bile-*

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[1] Spring_1, Summer_1, Fall_1, Winter_1, Libration_1, [WoeDay comes here] Spring_2, Summer_2, Fall_2, Winter_2, Libration_2 [followed by WowDay, of course]—but why am I telling you things you already know?

[2] Say, the Second, when the children were yet tots, but another if you wish.

[3] [*Addition 1993*: In actuality, WoeDay was hardly "unofficially known." ∂sp's memory failed him here in 1988. Both WoeDay [SIMXA] and WowDay [SAMXA] were officially noted under those titles in Thefarien statutes and resolutions, and indeed were standard points in the legal year for commencing and concluding all sorts of contractual obligations. SIMXA, in fact, was a standard term for various sorts of empowered peculation, depending on the pitches of its pronunciation, as witness the full name of the IRS. And SAMXA, in Pitch #1, meant "windfall"; in Pitch #3, "Hot Dog!" or "Hot Puppies!" or "Goodygoody gumdrops!"—the usual interjection employed at Sudden, Unexpected Wealth.]

from–a–Seleital–Bulb [known with no affection at all by the acronym IRS], increasingly took leave of reason, sense, practicality, and fair play. Aged, impoverished widows, left with their only option that of ogling passersby fruitlessly from the steps of the Temple of Uni, were in 598 saddled with duties on their upper undergarments that ran to 9 ❀ per ❀ of hyperassessed value, a tax of almost 40 per pent [*sic*] while the shameless POLTRNI, or holebarons, of Vei were actually *paid* up to 5 ❀ in the ❀ to maintain their subclass subterranean shacks in increasing *dis*repair. The worst inequity of an unfair time, however, was the Imposition on Enchanted Woodlots, levied, as luck would have it, in 612 when Dsp, returning home in tatters from his fourth VELXES with Eniaca, found that [a] he had been wedding–gifted by his life's careers' single satisfied client with the absolutely Unrestricted and utterly Unalienable Deed to an undubitably dryad–haunted oak[4] set spang in the middle of Ye Forest of Broslyn, the feyest wildwood known to Thefariens, and [b] that said oak's owner [i.e., Dsp] now owed to the IRS an assessment of 5 times its grossly inflated value, which is to say, roughly, his estimated income for the next 15 years...should such occur. A grateful nation soon gasped in enthrallment at his flight to Ye Forest, his discovery of his oak, and his enlistment of its resident dryad, Cortia Genannt, in the relatively messy business of casting a spell which, circulated in pamphlet form, frustrated the greedy *Nellies*, almost for good and all.

> Show how this daring move was executed, locating the oak and repeating the spell, if possible. Be sure to trace the chain of events that resulted in the first reduction in taxes recorded in Cycle XV...and show how it bankrupted High Thefarie within the next 7 years, coming perilously close to rendering it helpless prey to the Bad Chaps come Cyclend. The high point of your discussion might well be a list of everyday items and the taxes upon them, figured in ❀ to the ❀...or, possibly, ❀ to the ❀.

III. Crime, of course, was not unknown to High Thefarie, blessed otherworld though it was/is/will be/might have been. Its attitude toward nonstandard territorial–invading behavior, if "crime" be considered such, was rather different from ours, even more—much as it pains your Guide to use the word in this [or any] context—*realistic*. We regard crime as an aberration, a sport, a malignant mutation in the healthy body politic which it is the function of Good Government and Meaningful Magistrates to confine, remit, and even [or so we hope] root out from life at large; our frustration when no such results show the remotest sign of forthcoming is, not to put too fine a point upon it, huge. The Thefariens, on the other hand, took it in stride. Crime, they considered, with its necessarily cyclic redistribution of wealth and power, as a necessary part of the *Gestalt*, the SCRMCAU, the Whole Schmier; further, as it was hence worth doing, it was, like every other societal function, worth doing *well*. "Prisons are Universities of Crime," a sorry indictment of The System for us, was its glory for the Thefariens—especially in those last frenzied years of XV, when tinkering with The System spiralled toward its apoplectic apogee. To Dsp, incarcerated[5] in Spring$_1$ 623 for a pent of pents in the maximum-security Submarine Holding Institute beneath the waves at Ywis, fabled Ywis, his brief time inside came as a revelation. A quick learner, in little less than a RealWorld month he had emerged as a Graduate Embezzler and Journeyman Conartist, and had been top of his class in Introductory Applied Begging and Theory of Lechery. His Four Public DISGRACES, of course, had automatically raised his grade .5 pent in each course; still, the achievement was unparalleled in the Institute's history. Had he only been younger, a brilliant career would have yawned before him above sea level. As it was, he returned, regretfully but necessarily, to the relentless frustrations of his career on the right, or rather wrong, side of the Law.

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[4] More accurately, a quite prickly SPRXA, or "randomly deciduous feather-bearing filetree," but "oak" is close enough for the point under discussion.

[5] The ostensible charge was Aggravated Simony, the real cause his error in judgment in the flanking maneuver which capped a spectacularly unsuccessful role in The War Between The Sexes.

EITHER plot the standard five-year curriculum for the Master of Criminality Degree at the Ywis Institute, quoting at least 3 (Three) course descriptions from the Catalogue; OR describe the extracurricular life of the inmates, giving particular attention to sports and to the, well, the brotherhoods, so gaudily clad, into which the student inmates perforce banded together, and their curious lifestyle; OR reproduce—witty analogies, sentimental nostalgias, and all—a large part of Þsp's Farewell Address, delivered to his erstwhile comrades of that intense month of felonious give-and-take. You may omit the tears in the last option, if you so choose.

IV. Proper Values, of course, and their inculcation, have ever been held a function of The Powers That Be, and in no wise did High Thefarie lag behind other, more familiar worlds, in its relentless pursuit of *The Right*.[6] To a casual observer, were any such to be found, its failure to litter the landscape with patriotic statues, friezes, mobiles, stabiles, undiles, placards, plaques, reliefs, posters, decals, and countless tawdry giveaways might seem to betoken a positive lack of interest in the land's greatness, but such was hardly the case. The visitor to the most remote public monument, the most unthematic public park, would find him/her/itself almost subliminally eased, by structures, vistas, and surrounding landscapes, into a sometimes surprised familiarity with the country's past, established and conjectured. The carefully tended, yet unmarked bloody smear on the scarp at Horizon Ledge, for example, did more to commemorate Leftwich's Leap than the gaudiest memorial relief-*cum*-inscription, however replete with dead and dying Dragons and Snollygosters, ever could; the broken footbridge at the River Dekhst's Damnable Delta impressed Eniaca's Sacrifice more forcibly and unforgettably on the young than any sequence of statuary, however gigantic and cunningly contrived, might hope to do. But it was at the unassuming provincial Parklet on the edge of Ye Forest of Broslyn, that out-of-the-way, almost stupidly anachronistic, overgrown grove, that the technique of memorial understatement found its fullest expression. The voyager who made her/its/his way to the center of the Maze and back again found that she/it/he had, as if by accident, been put through the Five Stages of Thefarien Existence, and would henceforth hew to the line, let the Wyverns fall where they may. Only Þsp, eternal alienated outlander, could have really seen what was happening, and he was unfortunately in Ye Forest on business.

But you, Oh Best Beloved, know the Plan, and the Truth behind the Plan, of Broslyn. Quote from the Plan, in fact, showing, for all to see, how landscape and vista combined, on the Trip In and the Trip Out of the Maze, so successfully to indoctrinate young Thefariens in the Five Facts of Life that they would henceforth be Useful Citizens, putty in the grasping hands of those who really ran things, TPTB. Try not to be too sardonic. Give a map, or at least a chart, of the Trips, if you can.

V. Show me where you live, of course, and I'll show you who you are...and probably *what*. This truism was doubly veracious in High Thefarie, that incessantly self-instructed elsewhere, specializing as it did in the material expression of normative psychology, perhaps betterknown as how-to-ism. Well and good, you might say, but the practice, under the pressure of outside events, did lead to excesses, even to obscene misinterpretations, and nowhere more than in the bombedout toolies flanking the Miasm, primarily in the slaphappy hamlets nestled by *Hellës Mouthe*, where the scofflawlessly polyphiloprogenitive and cretinous inhabitants took advantage of a loophole in their tattered building code to repair the inroads of the *Terror* attendant upon the Eucharistic Schism with residences that were, to put the best possible construction on the worst possible constructions, *Not In Good Taste*. Trust Þsp, scrabbling a wretched existence in the Capitol lobby in Enphurli early in 597, to have preserved his startled observations on the outskirts' hyperanatomical BauHäuserei in an overlong series of limp near-lyrics, the most notorious being the vicious, or rather viscous, *Intimations of Immorality*, existent in two completely different versions, the first beginning

I love my wife...

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[6] Actually, TSULE—"the-[value]-to-the-buttockward"—is what they *really* said, but to insist on the difference here were merely to increase the already considerable confusion.

But Oh You Bungalow....

while the second—and better-known—commences

My heart leaps up when I behold

A VIPA[7] *in a cul-de-sac....*

These two versions preface the collection entitled, on its anonymous publication later that year, *Visions of Heramve, or, Building the Full Life*, a scabrous scroll that formulates, in 125 SCMTA, or "configurations," the most hair-raising erotic arrangments conceivable, while at the same time purporting to be, as it actually is, a painfully objective presentation of popular domestic architecture in the back country.

> Write a critical review—better late than never—of the aforementioned work, giving particular attention to its unrelenting interplay between shoddy, jerrybuilt architecture and febrile and utterly impractical, not to say impossible, sexual instruction, quoting liberally from at least 1 (One) of the poems in English translation (prose will do), and attempting to reproduce some equivalent representations of the accompanying diagrams. Conclude your review with (a) some cogent reflections on inevitable injuries to slavish individuals (couples, triads, tetrads, pents, sextets, whatever) who should try to follow the lesson of certain of these wretched shacks, especially the deadly 55th, and (b) some psychopolitocosociological conjecture as to what there was in such a disgusting production that tempted Dsp to neglect his socially useful work of lobby-sweeping in order to pursue it.

VI. In every culture, of course, Superiors, whether social or administrative, must be treated as such, must—more narrowly—be *addressed* [and be *seen* to be addressed] as such by their Inferiors. In other times and places, this latter problem has imposed solutions of two basic varieties: A simple "Your Grace" followed by a thoroughgoing employ of the third person of the verb, say, has sufficed in many a more class-ridden land than ours, while yet even more stratified societies have taken refuge in the multiplication of honorifics—verbal modes, adulatory nouns, whirling euphemisms, and especially inflated adjectival superlatives—varying directly as the upward distance of the addressee from the addressor. But High Thefarie, in this as in much else, was different: Though [or possibly *because*] it was crisscrossed by graded systems of social, administrative, appointive, natal, and other precedence, a weird linguistic inversion, spawned by some primeval principle of compensation, came into play somewhere in the mists of XIV, and *stayed*. Inferiors [so ran the rationale] could only be kept in their place by verbal *flattery*; Superiors could only maintain their rank by verbal *endurance*. It was thus quite usual for an upper-rank Civil Servant, belted and garlanded, to frame a request to his lowliest Underdunger's Apprentice, say to shovel offal from his garden path as, "Would His Most Serene and Lofty Enhancer of the Excruciatingly Comely Droppings of the Ennobled and Ennobling Stock of the Absolute Acme of the Artiodactyla Deign to Dignify this more than contemptible individual by Plying His Divinest of Instruments on That Ineffably Beautiful and Most Vividly Conglomerate Viscosity to His Lovely Leftward?"—and equally usual for the addressed Apprentice to frame a reply to this creature who outranked him in well-nigh astronomical units thus: "Stuff it, you chinless XACMAX-nose[8], I got better things to do." After which, of course, the steaming pile would be removed immediately; but the amenities had been observed. Thus was guilt assuaged on one side, and steam let off on the other. The only trouble was that, as the tensions of daily life increased and multiplied during the final years of XV, the tenuous balance between lauding and vilipending was somehow upset. The Inferior could no longer mollify his resentments with his traditional billingsgate, and revved up his nastiness, notch by foul notch; the Superior, at first terrified for his standing, then enraged at the increased excoriation, expanded his laudation so far beyond the standard honorifics that even the dimmest Inferior could feel the Irony, and the fat was in the fire.[9]

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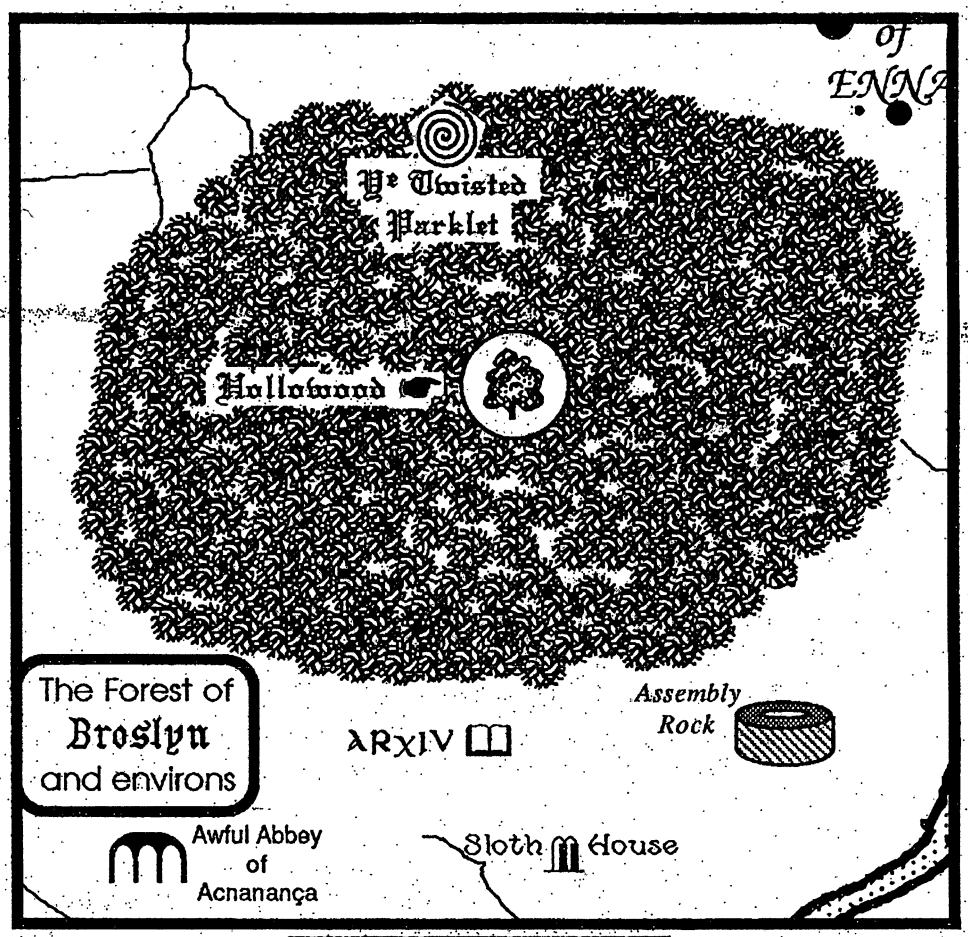
[7] The normal term for "moral chutzpah," but such can obviously not be its meaning here. We are doubtless dealing with a corrupt text—check that; *corrupt* it certainly is, but in other ways—with an *incorrect* text. The normally translated variant is VRPA, "cottage"—though that leads to technical difficulties too thorny to be gone into in a semi-popular account such as this.

[8] As to XAÇMAX, don't ask. There is absolutely no equivalent to this multipedal, twining-proboscised horror in the Real World, and a good thing, too.

Discuss the Bolsena WordRiots of early 624 at length, supplying an accurate transcript of the epochal exchange between a Superior and an Inferior that set them off. Identify the principals if you can, with adequate distinction between their ranks. Then recount, more or less painfully and systematically, the spread of dissension and the series of summits and arbitrations, constantly relocated, each with its verbal swap, that would have culminated in reconciliation during the final meeting at Vel, of all places, had that meeting not taken up on just the wrong day in 625. Speculate on what the terms of the reconciliation would have been.



[*Maps added 1993*]

[9] Literally, "the [super-]saturated wick was in the searpan," but close enough.

EPIGRAPH
to Version 3.01 (1989)

Epi*graph*. That's more like it. A simple afterwriting. Not a finish. Not a Dickens windup of all threads, with Tom Pinch playing the organ as if his heart would break. Not even a collection of lists; I put those down last year, and where did it get me? But this year, only a note...The question is, *What?*

How about the alphabet? Basic High Thefarien employed 17 letters, given below in uncial type with pronunciations:

A	"European": long, "aaah"; short, "ah"
C	always hard, as English K
Ç	a spirant, English sh
E	"European": long, "ay" as in "hay"; short, "eh"
I	"European": long, "ee" as in "wee"; short, "ih"
L	as I recall, a bilateral cacuminal spirant, like Welsh "ll"—but use English "l"
M	more or less like English "m"
N	more or less like English "n"
P	English "p"—but not aspirated in initial situations
R	trilled, but English back "r" will serve
S	as English
T	English "t"—but not aspirated in initial situations
Θ	English "th" in "with"; never "hard" as in "this"
U	like English "u", but always rounded, whether long or short: "oo"; never with a glide "yoo"
V	halfway between English "v" and "w"; voiced or unvoiced
X	never "eks"; the aspirated unvoiced velar or guttural stop, like Greek *chi*; as in Scots "loch" or German "ach"; written sinking below the line, as in PULUMXVA
Z	as English

It should be noted that the liquids and nasals, L & R, M & N, are often employed as vowels. Other letters were employed, for example, in loanwords. Absolute consistency in spelling was rarely attained, and has not been sought in these accounts. The more common follow:

B	more or less as in English; not a native Thefarien sound; the only Thefarien labial stop is P "p"
D	as English "d"; not a native Therfarien sound, but occurs in loanwords; the only Thefarien dental stop is T "t"
F	English "f", to insist on the unvoicing of V
G	like English "g" in "get"; always "hard", never palatalized
H	as in English, prevocalic "h"
K	like English "k"; sometimes found for C
O	"European": "oh" long and short
W	like English "w"; quite rare
Y	a rounded "ee" sound, like German "ü"

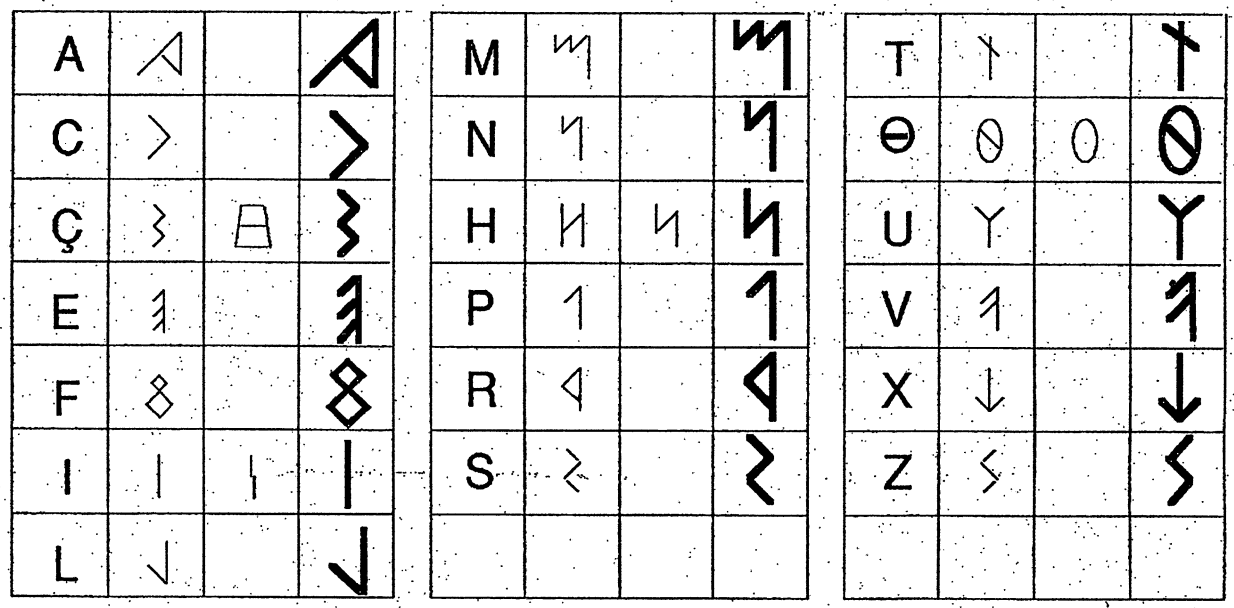
Some of the letter-borrowings are of great antiquity. The name BUδOδON, for example, from the earliest creation myth [see HT 12] requires three; the sunken island of YWIS, which went down sometime in the Second Round, needs two.

The uncials here adopted bear only a little relation to the actual letterforms, which were rather rude and retrograde [right-to-left], to boot. There are occasional samples of the real thing in the texts above, but left-to-right uncial has been preferred.

Which should be enough for now. An epigraph that has to do with writing. That's more like it.

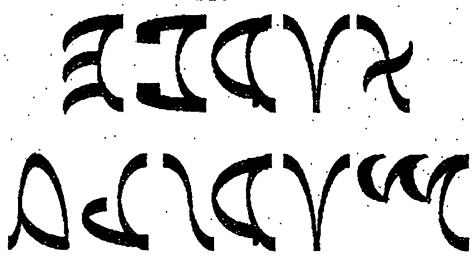
November, 1989

[*Added 1993:* The signature is in good ol' HT punctangular (the *Scratch*), which deserves to be set forth on its own as least once. Here we go: Below are standard versions of the 17 Thefarien letters, plus *F* and *H*. Remember, writing is retrograde, from Left to Right. The RW resemblances are certain; what is uncertain is the cause. Parallel development? A contribution from a Cyclist? Impossible to say.



Primitive-looking, I grant you; still, with care it has a refreshing directness:

There were cursive and calligraphic alphabets as well. Here, from a "sampler" [LABTIC], is δsp's favorite Thefarien phrase—the exhortation to "Happy Hocks!" that he used on all occasions, fitting or not:



Spare, perhaps, but not at all primitive or shabby.]

The GodTrust Introit
aka
The Glocken Spiel
(date uncertain)

hi

call me clyde
im your guide

the structure you see directly before you
though sometimes startling in its upward
thrust is really better classified as
middle mannerist horizontal designed
after the local fashion to be
an instant ruin but of course
since none of us is perfect it took
a number of years and even now
to the practiced eye it isnt done
though such is the nature of inconclusion
a technique brought to its highest here
that its almost impossible to decide
whether for instance this topless tower
when done succumbed to roving marksmen
or else was meant to stop so short
but lets get down to business i call
your attention to the moat of all
this structures glories the only one
in perfect working condition
artfully dark and deep and dank
it performs its long appointed task
excluding kraken wyvern ogre
and preserving this ruin from destruction
i call your attention next to the entrance
inviting broad and open sufficient
to handle sixteen sledges abreast
if only the drawbridge werent stuck
so tantalizingly halfway up

i d come down and
across to you but
it really isnt
practical

ive tried to put in
refreshment stands
but got no answer

i m sorry i know
the trip from the mainland
is tiring and dull

i sometimes wonder
why do you come at all
if i hadnt got on the tour
no one d come alone

it lets rain in but
i dont really care
in fact i like the rain

i tried to drain
the moat but found
the grease trap clogged

the occasional novice
walks by and gives me
her best call and wiggle
i m sorry i sunk the boat

next set within the wall behold
the scattered glitters now and then
the flash of gold betokening
the opulence and glory of a vanished
era not to forget the wisdom
as the more perceptive among you may
may have noticed these flashes form a pattern
trembling just at the edge of deep
revelation you notice the pattern snakes
around this tower doubles above
and below that mullioned window and then
with a sudden swoop it dives to the entrance
and shoots inside precisely before
it begins to make some sort of sense
some glorious sense betokening
the ultimate disclosure within
what glories lie heaped and profuse
what ripened peaks of ancient attainment
what treasures of great and glorious craft
flood over the floors lie there for the taking
atop it all behold this noble pennant
its message blurred past reading of course
but noble still betokening

oh god we now
have got to the flashy part
it isnt gold at all
its pyrites worst grade

wouldnt you rather
hear perhaps
a mectub solo

the ogres threw rocks
at this bit

but no one cares
about the pattern
i know you dont

i ll tell what glories
breadwrappers bones
and dirty laundry

flap flap and flap again
you know what it said
it said post no bills buster
it said contagious possible plague
it said private please keep out
and it was right as hell because
it passes the wit of man to conceive
why any rational being would care to see
the shoddy collection of false starts and lint
inside this knocked off beta minus burial mound
go on throw rocks and hiss and spit in the messy moat
and tell the rubberneck office not to send any more rubes
unless they want the whole scam including the ferry franchise
to go bellyup in less time than it takes to tell about it since
theyve certainly got someone here who s going to tell about it and tell
about it and

this concludes the performance

h i

call me clyde
i m your guide

from the

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT
on the Terminal Praxis, 1989

Carissimi/ae–

And here we are again. Or, rather, here I am again. You weren't here last time. That's right. You've changed; I'm the same. Got it in one. What are all these mutterings about Your Guide's being Past It? I mean, look at me: Cleareyed. Visionary. Objective. Tough as a tick, or whatever. Able to leap whole sentences in a single bound. The playboy of the Westron ParaWorld. Himself, the Trick Cyclist...

Anyway, dollinks, perpend: Here cometh the yearly scam, the seasonal spiel, the ineluctably inevitable Præparatio Outaθefariena, as one might call it, and doubtless shall. But I have no need at this point to con you; you have the materials for that interesting procedure in hand, or at home, or buried under something. It is time for me to cut the rhetoric and do my meager bit in readying you for the Long Questioun, the essay required on the Terminal Praxis, so that each and every will turn in a performance of the sort that we ParaGeography mavens are wont to refer to technically as:

ein ganz vortreffliches
abererdkundliches[1] Wunderwerk!!!

Which is to say, it should sweep the board, rendering every other conceivable Werk as nothing more than the inane babble of Tsedraylte Mishegoss, fully justifying the Two Hours you shall have spent in choosing and writing it.

It is normally at this point in the proceedings that Your Guide gazes off into the blue[2] and begins to excogitate broad areas of Thefariena from here and there, in no particular order—vague general subjects on which you might expend your several geniuses, saying something like, "To facilitate your *Wunderwerk*, let me specify the 6 [Six] areas whence the 6 [Six] Long Questions will be drawn. Be thinking along these lines for the next X [Eks] days:" Harmless and bloodless, of no particular importance. This year, however, things are different, given the startling nature of recent revelations. Read on...

NOTICE !!!

Much as it pains him, Carissimae/i, Your Guide is compelled to call your active attention to **The Lost Years**—that suspiciously quiet patch of time between dsp's installation as XIVAÇ REÇL in Winter$_1$, XV/615, and the immediate events leading up to the War Between The Sexes in Winter$_2$, XV/622. To hear dsp tell it, in the fiendishly manipulated confines of HT 28,"Home, Sweet" (above, pp. 46-49), he had finally come to rest, found HEARTSEASE & HAPPYDAZE in the harmless pursuit of storytelling [*storytelling*?him? the Anti-Narrator? him?] to the simple rustics near the backwater of Tummling, and, for once in his decades in High Thefarie—that Bijou By The Bight—not constituted an active drain on the patience and peace of mind of the commonwealth. Never moved foot out of the toolies, he would have us believe...to which, as you well know, the only adequate reply is a heartfelt, well-articulated, sardonic

HA!

followed by the outraged query, "What about *LastQuest* **Piglet**? Five years rustication, indeed!"

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[1] If anyone cares, nestled in this adjective is the just-invented German for "parageography"—Abererdkunde, f... It's formed by analogy with Aberglaube "superstition", as it relates to Glaube "belief". Fills a crying need, dunnit?

[2] He keeps a patch of blue in his sanctum sanctorum for just this purpose, placed handily just above the Mac. [Actually, it's a blown Sony diskette, but never mind that.]

Yes, ƀsp was out of the country! You have the recently excavated documents at your fingers' ends, of course, and could, should Your Guide require it, cite chapter and verse from here to SNUIλϕ concerning the cabals, the conspiracies, the strange desires and and stranger designs, the overarching sociopathic ineptitude with which ƀsp, sneaking off on the labyrinthine twists of one more quest—so disingenuously termed *LastQuest*—besmirched his sixties and endangered the body politic. But the demands of scholarship, as always, fare far from the beaten track, struggling up the high road—or, as it may be, plunging to the cloacine intertwinings of the drainage system. What is needed is not so much the sorry tale of One Man's Catastrophes as the background (and the playground) for this concerted efflorescence of individual depravity. You will therefore draw upon your absolute knowledge of period and place to fill in specific areas of knowledge drawn from those lost years. Lest, in your desire to Get It All Down, you write madly through examination period, break, and the first three weeks of Spring Term, a benevolent Guide herewith sets parameters for your answers, along the lines of which you should be thinking until the Praxis.[3] Long Questions, then, will be drawn from the following areas of investigation, especially as they relate to *LastQuest* [codename, of course, **Piglet**] in the years XV/616-XV/620:

This Little Piggie Went to Mark It: *The Æesthetics and Politics of Thefarien Graffiti in the Superheated Years.*

This Little Piggie Stayed Dumb: *The Breakdown of Thefarien Education as the Cycle/Round ground to end.*

This Little Piggie Had 'RλUSPIC': *The Psychodynamics of Luxury among the Several Classes.*

This Little Piggie Had Noon: *The Crisis in Thefarien Time-Reckoning in the Late 'Teens.*

And This Little Piggie Cried OUλI, OUλI, OUλI...: *The Ethnomusicology of Thefarien PsychoPop.*

All The Waste Home: *Existential Futility as Exemplified in the Final Stages of* LastQuest **Piglet.**

Let me counsel you, *yet again*, to keep your knowledge of the Thefarien language in good repair; it is to be tested to the utmost in the Long Question—*any* Long Question—and that you must, therefore, be able to translate the inscription on pp. 70-71 above *Do Not Finalize Your Translation* until you see what the Long Questions are, and decide which one you will be answering. And brush up on your colloquial Thefarien; it may be required...

Which should just about do it...except for 1 [One] Thing: Bring to the top of your mind—for it will definitely be needed in your treatment of the background of *LastQuest Piglet*, the Five Canonical Parts of a Mystical Quest. To save you time, let me reiterate them here:

ΘUN:	Offset—The Movtivated Departure
ZλL:	Outfare—The Thrust to the Periphery of the Known
CI:	Uppile—The Inspissation of Experiences
Çλ:	Crossout—The Transfiguration of the Quester
ΩλX:	Backwend—The Traumatic Return to the Quotidian World

But ƀsp, of course, broke the mold. Shoddily, as usual. And so, with a sigh, here's the Sixth Part of Five:

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[3] Only along the lines, of course. These clues—let us call them that—as can be seen at a glance, are ridiculously broad, much too open for the Longest of Long Questions and Long Answers. I wouldn't want you to write so as to conceal a Lack of Knowledge. Far from it. Tsk.

hUΘ: Throughness—The Utter Confusion of the MetaMachination[4] from Beginning to End—which is to say, **ðsp** thought he knew what he was doing....

And now...ooops. I forgot the most important thing. To structure your deliberations, as it were, let me insert a skeleton outline[5] of *LostQuest* **Piglet** into the Chronology:

616: [61] Summer2, Tummling: The Closeted Cabal
WowDay, Libration2, Tummling: Offset on the Northfaring
617: [62] Spring1: The Sluggish Outfare I: The Slothhouse Dawdle
Summer1: The Sluggish Outfare II: Tea and Suck at the Bower
Winter1: The Sluggish Outfare III: The Concertina Longueur
Woe Day, Libration1: Outfare Proper I: The Crossover to UnMap
Summer2: Outfare Proper II: The TransKobold Kaper
WowDay, Libration2: Outfare Proper III: To The Lands Beyond the Wind
618: [63] Spring1: Uppile I Begins: The Vortex
Futile Harangue when Council ["Nellies"] meets on the Ropewalk in Clus
Summer1-WowDay, Libration2: Uppile I continues, culminating in the Awful Affair of the Inverted Celebrant at the Aerie
619: [64] Spring1-Libration1: Uppile II commences and continues on to the Wyrmhole
WoeDay, Libration1: Back in High Thefarie, Nellies at Enphurli declare the government bankrupt beyond all repair (HT 42.2); austerity instituted
WoeDay, Libration1: Uppile II peaks in the Descent to the Depths
Spring2-Libration2: Uppile III: The Mousing Beneath
WowDay, Libration2: Crosssoul at The Abyss
620: [65] [All year] Backwend I: The Difficult Ascent
WoeDay, Libration1: Back in High Thefarie, Divorce IV (HT 32.1), DSR sloughed in absentia, of course
WowDay, Libration2: Backwend II: Light at the end of the Tunnel
621: [66] Spring1-Spring2: Backwend III: The Long Way Around
Summer2: Backwend IV: Over the Edge
WowDay, Libration2: Backwend V: Tummling: The Disguised Return
622: [67] WoeDay, Libration1: Backwend VI: Tummling: The Uncasing
Winter2: *Eniaca's Mad Dash* from Winter Palace to Tummling (HT 27.2)

Everything is *now*, I trust, perfectly clear.

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[4] This should not be confused, by the way, with Jason's amêchanía, or "without-a-clue-ness", manifested in his mishandling of the Voyage of Argo. **ðsp**'s sin is the less venial, since, where Jason messed things up through simple funk, **ðsp** appears to have blorrowed on principle.

[5] You can fill in the details, of course. This is a remarkably incomplete survey, simply serving to remind you of the location of **Piglet** in time.

Azoy. Almost *There*. Nearly touching our respective Termini. Yet a few days, and ye the all encircling world—at least the world of High Thefarie—shall see no more. Sobbing a little [I do hate a whimpering world], it will recede into the morass of your memory's dead storage, a polyfont fleck on your consciousness as you go ahead through life, whatever that may be. But, O Carissimi/ae, for the next few days you are, at least in theory, *its*.[6] And, by the same token, *mine*. It's quite a responsibility, and I feel it keenly.[7] As keenly, I trust, as you do yours—the Furtherance of Knowledge about the ins, outs, ups, downs, and especially *betweens*, of High Thefarie—that Fateprint on the Sands of ParaTime. My heart being too full to engage in highfalutin rhetoric, let me turn to once again to that ParaGeographical Poet Laureate, W. H. Auden:

Stagger onward rejoicing;
And even then if, perhaps
Having actually got
To the last col, you collapse
With all Atlantis gleaming
Below you, yet you cannot
Descend, you should still be proud
Even to have been allowed
Just to peep at Atlantis
In a poetic vision:
Give thanks and lie down in peace,
Having seen your salvation.

Simply substitute High Thefarie for "Atlantis." The result will perhaps be a bit overblown [and unscannable], but should show, better than any words of mine possibly could, the depth of my feeling, and the Utter Importance of the Subject. Of course.

TURCE MURILA
from Your Preceptor & Guide,
Douglass Parker

[by no means[8] to be confounded with]

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[6] Kindly note: Possessive case, with no apostrophe. Remember.

[7] It's also a temptation to...nawww. Never fear: I shall be kind and gentle in my moment of Absolute and Unchecked Power over your fates. Were it ðsp who had you in charge, that would be a different matter. But, as I frequently point out, there is No Conceivable Connection, save for the unfortunate coincidence of acronym, between that misplaced malcontent and Your (utterly well-adjusted and benevolent) Guide. Not to worry.

[8] I'm not hardnosed about this, yunnerstan. I mean, it's an understandable mistake. When two individuals share initials, and occupations, and birthdays, and general physical makeup, and place of residence, and proclivities, and all that, the casual observer can certainly be forgiven for leaping to the conclusion that they're the same, somehow. I blush to confess it, but I've even done it myself, on occasion, and I know the truth. The important thing, however, is to avoid persisting in error once it's pointed out. Especially since I am as veracious as the day is long, whilst ðsp is almost archetypal Unreliable Narrator.

Identification Lists
from the Terminal Praxis, 1989

Over the years, this section has treated items that have, increasingly, verged on the baroque: People, Sayings, Places [primarily Buildings], Events, Geographical Anomalies, Occupations, Documents, Groups, Micromaps, Gestures, and Architectural Inscriptions. It is therefore somewhat of a relief for Your Guide, as it should be to you, to turn to the listing of TSOTYWE, or The Sort Of Things You Would Expect.[1] It can never be sufficiently emphasized that High Thefarie, for all its purely specious resemblances to our here and now, is a genuine Elsewhere. It is not at all like the Real World, and nowhere does that appear more definite than in the [potentially prosaic] areas of what might, in a different manifold, be subsumed under Botany and Zoology. And so these items will here, but with the reservation that the boundaries between Thefarien vegetable life and Thefarien animal life are not, of course, to drawn with such happy abandon as they are in our own dear world. Not that one could gather that from the hitherto published writings of ðsp, whose insensitivity to natural phenomena of almost any sort was well-nigh preternatural. No matter, it is up to you to set the record straight with incisive, scientific descriptions of the denizens, animal, vegetable, and, well, *inter*, of High Thefarie.

A.1: FAUNA

What has ðsp said of the quadru+peds of High Thefarie? Very little. Oh, the nonhumanoid Cyclenders lurking outside: Wyverns, Snollygosters, the odd Dragon or two. And the beasts of burden/travel: the thoat [ΘUΘ] and the χϽλϛ. One incarnate horror, the χλϛϽλχ. Not to forget the ruling class of porcine totems, lordly and lardly in their sties, and the occasional Gryphon. But more than that, hardly anything. Which gives a totally incorrect impression of the place. For High Thefarie was, almost literally, stuffed with animal life, creatures of a variety and number to startle even the most jaded parazoologist.

Below are listed 11 (Eleven) of the nonhumanoid lifeforms most frequently encountered; and 1 (One) rather rare one. Choose 3 (Three). Of these, one must be a Wild (in fact, savage) Lifeform, one a Lifeform domesticated for some sort of service, and one a Lifeform employed (usually or extraordinarily; it makes no difference) by Thefariens as a Pet. One of these three should also be the rare, not to say unique, Form noted above. Identify and describe each in a purely scientific manner as to appearance, locale, diet, function, etc., and mention in passing, as it were, at least one specific instance where ðsp encountered it/them. Drawings might not be amiss...if you draw.

1. Coiled Arriba
2. Nought Mire
3. Crested Cmfwyp
4. PieBald Wobbler
5. Ribald Riposte
6. Omnivorous Snaxon
7. Cuddle Soam
8. Tertiary Slitherer
9. Yonic A Minore
10. Ripsanders
11. Bold Casion
12. DooberDauber

[1] Not that the knowledge required to identify these items is any less precise or bizarre. Perish the thought.

A.2: FLORA

And what have we here in the received writ? Almost nothing. The analogue for oak—the SPRχλ or "randomly deciduous feather-bearing filetree"—in a footnote, yet. And that about does it. What in the world was the matter with ðsp? Didn't he like Nature? [2] Well, there *is* the SELEJTAL; give the man his due, though he mentioned that beauteous bush for all the wrong reasons. But the jungly plenitude of the vegetable kingdom in High Thefarie—who could gather it from the words of our usually unreliable source? It's up to you, Carissimae/i.

Below are listed 12 (Twelve) out of the millions of Thefarien plantforms. Choose any 3 (Three). Adequately described each as to appearance, locale, peculiarities, etc., and mention, as in the Fauna above, at least one specific instance where ðsp encountered it/them. Again, competent drawings would help the overall impression.

1. Rambler Ruse
2. Eniaca's Capillaries
3. Vinous χMλÇ-trap
4. Corkadril Writher
5. Fugue Neaton
6. Cursory Glans
7. Bivalve Succulents
8. Beptcist Menace Tree
9. Chtonic Jacketch
10. Creeping Gadzucks
11. Sumbleweed
12. SeaWoad

[2] Of course not; the fact shrieks from every line he ever wrote.

LONG QUESTIONS
from the Terminal Praxis, 1989

I. Education, of course, is *always* on the decline. Things are never what they were when *we* were in school, moan the morbidly mature, and right they are. But one should remember that, in schooling as in anything else, decadence takes various forms : sometimes reading sags, sometimes history hiccoughs, sometimes hard science withers and rots, and sometimes those disciplines which we call, quite ambiguously, the *social* sciences, well, these nearly sink from sight. So here, so in High Thefarie. The particular academic mess in late XV, from the 580's on, was to be found in what we would call geography, though Thefareography might be a better term here. A survey taken in 610 pointed out that younglings' knowledge of their own country was abysmal: only few provincials could locate, on a blank map, the capital at Enphurli; young Enphurlites were almost wholly ignorant of the outlying districts—they knew there was a place called *Tummling* somewhere, but they weren't quite sure of the direction, or the distance, or the population, or...But, if knowledge of the configuration of High Thefarie sank to a sorry ebb, that of *Low* Thefarie—the lands beyond the mountains and the River Edge—plummeted almost past the vanishing point. Maps of the period show the Outer Lands, or Low Thefarie, as the blankest of empty spaces, reflecting the fact that at least an entire generation had grown up in total ignorance of the area from which the Dangers would come at Cyclend/Roundoff. Which will explain the slow progress that ðsp and the Pent made in Outfare Proper, once they had crossed over to "Unmap" (their term; I am not making this up) from Concertina Pass on WoeDay, 617. They were, almost literally, without a clue, and it was only dumb luck (if that is the word, given what happened to them) that they made it to the Periphery at all, and that ðsp made it back.

> You, however, are better informed. Trace that section of LastQuest **Piglet** known as Outfare Proper, from Concertina Pass to the Vortex in the Lands Beyond the Wind, demonstrating your knowledge of the Thefareography of the Outlands and, incidentally, following our brave little band as they went from horror to horror, shedding the veneer of civilization through continual contact with what can only be called Creative Barbarism. The facts, the settlements, the natural phenomena—all these, of course, are so bizarre that you cannot expect to be believed...but never fear, Your Guide knows and trusts you, and will realize the essential Truth of your treatise. His trust and realization will be slightly firmer, perhaps, if you deign to include a freehand map of the principal places visited by the Pent + One.

II. The Rich, of course, are always with us. Even in the tawdriest of times, despite all that concerned Society can do to separate them from their curse, *They* occur, the *Haves*, those feckless accumulators, condemned by Training, Circumstance and just sheer Bad Luck to be warped by an overplus of substance. And the Rich, conscious of Society's disapproval, have endeavored, at least at certain periods, to conceal their unhappy state—by driving old cars, wearing jeans and/or hand–me–downs, indulging in hyper–correct pronunciations, generally bending heaven and earth to appear poor like everyone else...but with this difference: They leave some clues that declare, to Those In The Know, "I Am Rich!!!—and I'm glad, too!!!" The shamelessness of such ploys is disheartening, and it probably affords but little satisfaction to us RealWorlders to note that a like phenomenon was to be noted among the chronic, hard–core Rich in late–XV High Thefarie. But "noted" is hardly the term; "swum in" might be better. The collective term for such antisocial stratagems there was known as RAUSPIE—"moneytalking"—the most thoroughgoing invention and codification of underhanded plutophrastic[1] indicators ever devised.

Everything came into it—costume, dwelling, eating habits, sexual preferences, tricks of speech, gait, gesture, expression...The slightest, least corner of the life of the Thefarien Rich bore its equivalent of a dollar sign, contained its indicator of well-to-do-ness. Of course, it got around eventually, which led, both indirectly and directly, to the volatile class-opposition that necessitated *LastQuest* **Piglet.**

> Go through the day—well, the morning—well, about an hour in the life of a Rich Thefarien in, say, XV/618, showing the workings of RAUSPIF, tracing the myriad of signs and signals of all sorts employed by a Rich Therfarien to inform other Rich Thefariens that he/she/it was indeed a Rich Thefarien. Choose the one area—clothing, sport, whatever—in which, in your analysis, the process became so cumbersome that it backfired, leading to (1) counterfeiting by the non Rich and (2) hence Revolution. A brief warstory from the *Great Devaluation*—also known as the *Credit Berating*, or *The Descent of the Specie*—of 621 might serve to pinpoint the problem here, possibly the Terrible Takeover Battle at The Temple of Tin.

III. "What time is it?" of course, though a common enough query in our RealWorld context these days, rarely provokes deep deliberation or much agonizing. We reserve our soul-searching for self-identification, not self-temporalization...though it is a process we neglect at our peril, fondly imagining that we are creatures of Standard Time, and forgetting how subject we are to jetlag, circadian rhythms, biological clocks, and all the other manifestations of subjective chronometry. But I turn aside from this tirade to point out that High Thefariens, one and all, were assailed by a assemblage of times, and time-pressures, that make us look simply well-regulated by contrast. The gross external times that had to be tracked were bad enough: there was the sun [CAΘ], the two moons, the interplay of seasons, the Cycle, the Round, the reigning SUS, to name but a few. But this was as nothing compared with the microchronic breakdown that was observed as the Cyclend approached: season into pents, and pents into pentlets, and finally into days, further analyzed into 5^2 divisions, roughly corresponding to our hours, each with its proper *name*, not *number*, and the same peculiarity holding for the subdivisions, and the subdivisions of those subdivisions, each again with its own epithet. What made things infinitely worse, however, was the subjective element: "TRX ÇA TIN CRTÇE?"—the Thefarien corresponding to our "What time is it" translates literally, it must be remembered as "What time *are you*?" The implication is, sadly, only too true. Each Thefarien was subject to a multitude of idiosyncratic, well, let us call them *Influences*, every single one with its own time-reckoning, every single one having to be accounted for in replying to that hideous question—which, by custom, *had* to be answered. By the time of *LastQuest* **Piglet**, the necessary items to be included in a reply had increased geometrically, with the sorry result that a full answer to the question, besides being a remarkably comprehensive survey of Thefarien history, astronomy, anatomy (yes, VA, there was such a thing as "stomach-time," but there was "*liver*-time," too), and what have you, occupied so much time in reply that the information given in the answer's beginning was out of date by the time it wound to end. And chronometers, which had been bulky anyway (not to mention curiously powered), verged on the huge, and were ruinous to read, and...

> Give the answer to "TRX ÇA TIN CRTÇE?" delivered to Dsp when he, ever the foreigner, incautiously posed it to the bartender/saddler at the Slothhouse in Cer-by-the-Sea in Spring[1], 617, thus causing "The Slothhouse Dawdle" and setting in action a chain of events that delayed LastQuest Piglet for a pent at least. List, in order, the parts of the answer, explaining what was meant by each one. (You need not give a full answer—time is of the essence here—but do remember that the minimum reply decreed by good taste and usage was a brusque 5^2 items, felt to be quite impolite.) Then describe—and possibly illustrate—the choronometer that had to be employed to keep track of all this, the one whose lack of portability led LastQuest Piglet into even more confusion and delay.

[1] I.e., "Money-talking."

IV. Music, of course, is a phenomenon that can not too much be wondered at. That the manipulation of such a tiny slice of the immense spectrum of possible vibrations in this universe—or another—should be capable, not merely of conveying to its auditors the gross lineaments of mere meaning, but of transferring the parameters of pleasure as well...this is the material of astonishment, one we do ill to treat with the same bland lack of intellectual curiosity that we expend upon the meanest of our quotidian *quisquiliae*. It is to be feared that Thefariens were no better; even as we, they accepted, with incomprehending enthusiasm, the auditory wonders that on occasion would exalt their drab lives to a higher plane, or plunge them to whatever depths were in fashion that year. Traveling "musical" groups [TCRTNI] were familiar parts of the Thefarien landscape in late XV, which is precisely the reason that Dsp and his associates chose this as a cover for the highly suspect undertakings of *LastQuest* **Piglet.** "Fiveplay + One" [MIXLT ac OUN] was scarcely a *professional* group, but professionalism counted for little in the reigning musical genre of the late six-teens, *PsychoPop*, which might appear to us to have aimed at the implantation *and* the defusing of antisocial attitudes through the relentless shouting of subversive phrases, undercut by a whining background that never involved the use of more than three "chords" in attendance. Dsp was, admittedly, a bit old for the athleticism involved, but he hugged the back of the stage, blew on the strings of his DLTIM[2], and left the writhing to his associates. Unfortunately, the whole scam came apart in a disastrous encampment/concert near Concertina Pass in Winter$_1$, 617, a presentation which not only failed to rouse the audience to the usual frenzy, but in fact put them—*and* "Fiveplay + One"—soundly to sleep. Was it the wrong wavelength? Was it infectious lassitude? No one knows.

> No one, that is, except you, O Carissimae/i. Supply knowledge's lack by reviewing the concert, working through the program, commenting on the group's appearance and expertise, comparing them to other groups, and let us say, accounting somehow for the soporific effect of the performance. Give the affair the lashing it deserved but could not get, given that all PsychoPop critics in the area fell just as deeply asleep as the other auditors. Be witty, acerbic, knowledgeable, and outraged at the attempt of this inept T=RTN to gull the provincial populace.

V. Solvitur Ambulando[3], of course, is a phrase dear to every parageographer's heart; it ennobles the profession. It is especially loved by the Allegorists among us, those who view, say, the tortured passage by Slough of Despond through Vanity Fair to Celestial City as The Way Things Spozed To Be, leading Christian through moral as well as physical space. These same enthusiasts, one fears, attach Normative Values to the Canonical Parts of the Quest[4], even basic–vanilla questlings, even a trip to the store. Sadly, it must be admitted that they over–interpret on occasion. Their upbeat moralizing analysis of *LastQuest* **Piglet**, for example, breaks apart into moral chaos at the end...not least because **Piglet** itself did just that. Look at it this way: Dsp and his shrinking band of feckless associates did, granted, proceed in the approved fashion for more than half the trip, even though Offset was marked by dither, through the race of Outface and the moral and other confusion of Upside; and Dsp was duly transfigured—that is, passed through Crossroad—receiving his first conviction of his place in the scheme of things when the Goshawful Gargle harangued him from the Depths of the Pit of the Abyss somewhere beneath the Land Beyond the Wind. Fine. It was in Backwend that things went seriously wrong. In the scheme of things, Backwend should be little more than a formality. The Transfigured Quester has merely to Return To Go, as it were, and put his newly acquired convictions/knowledge/sense-of-purpose into effect. He may be delayed, of course, spending (to entertain a wholly ridiculous hypothesis) seven years or so in some farWestern limbo cosseted by the bland charms of the only nymph around, but the trip must be, well, monotonous:

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[2] In his defense, it should be pointed out that this was not his instrument; he was a MEDDICS [call it "bagpipes"] man. But there is no MEDDICS in a PsychoPop group.

[3] Literally, "it is [re]solved by walking [though it]." Good motto for a maze, or indeed for any Quest.

[4] To refresh your memory, see the sysematic breakdown presented in HT 44, pp. 108–109.

he should undergo no new experiences which might shake his recently undergone Crassseul. But ƀsp? It would be laughable were it not so traumatic. Not only did he spend, having lost his useful associates, a solid *year* alternately clawing and crawling his way back above ground, but he then took a wrong turn and stumped his way resolutely further into the void, past Unmapped Steppe, Nontravelled Blank, and Trackless Waste, to fetch up for a *fiftnight*, a freezingly fearsome *fiftnight*, in the Wholly Abominable City–State of SNUJλϕ—a sojourn which wholly undid his Transfiguration, reduced him to a spineless state far worse than the quivering jellihood in which he had set forth on *LastQuest* **Piglet**, and finally fetched him up, corrupted and confused, at the River Edge in the far, well, *South*[5], staring blankly across at the tawdry charms of the Summer Palace, and wondering who he was, or indeed *if* he was. No wonder he sneaked home to Tummling disguised—quite easily—as a Nugative Naught. The real hell of it of his corruption in SNUJλϕ was, though, that he had rather enjoyed it.

> Describe the Wholly Abominable (and, Indeed, Utterly Disgusting) City-State of SNUJλϕ in some detail, noting with lubricious glee the shoddy enticements and lurid allures with which it unmanned ƀsp in early XV/621. Do not neglect the obvious landmarks of that Sink of Iniquity—which, for moral grunginess, easily surpassed preFlood Bolsena—and do not fail to include some account of the Mall of Malfeasance, where the final Revolting Rite was held. A plan of the City-State might help.

VI. Graffiti's Great Age has, of course, come and gone in the Here and Now, or the Here and Then. WallScrawling described its mighty USArc into Art in the late 60's, peaked in the early 70's, and thudded back to scribbled puerility and near–porn before the decade now ending broke haltingly from the blocks. Was it only yesterday, or rather yesteryear, that the Best Minds of Their Generation plastered their sweetness over hoarding and restroom, lavishing their evanescent genius on proles and eggheads alike? We shall not look again, in our time, on the likes of

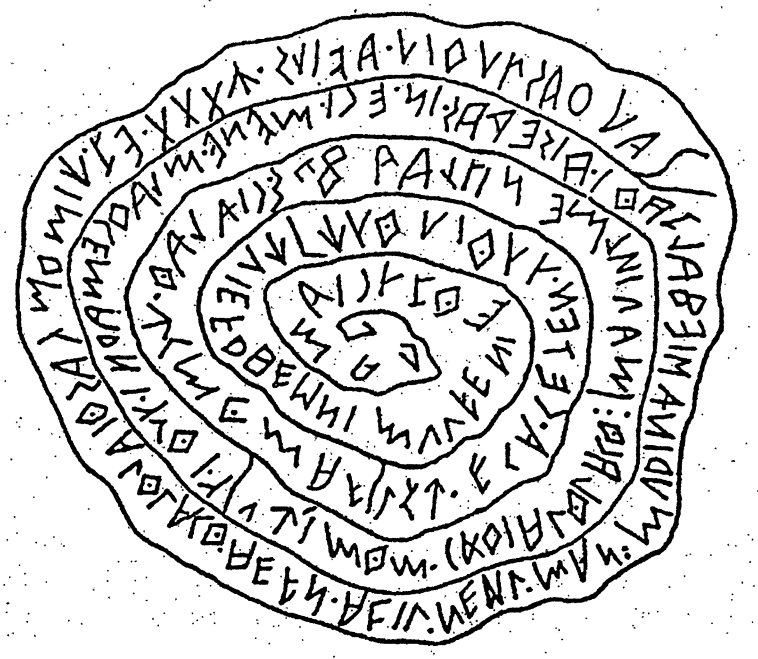
BE, THAT YOU MAY DO
—Sartre
DO, THAT YOU MAY BE
—Camus
DOBEDOBEDO
—Sinatra

But I digress. Suffice it to say that High Thefarie, even as we, had its Golden Age of Graffiti. *Purposeful* Graffiti, of course—you will recall, among many, the plain powerful statement by the Sons of the Boar, to be found on p.65 above, where the boar emerges from the graffito that says just that, in a notable mingling of [1] artistic thrust and [2] political daring. And it is just those two characteristics, rarely found so early as the Boar Graffito [it dates from XV/583, during BREAKOUT], that distinguished Thefarien Graffiti of the Great Age, the late the late six–teens and early –twenties. Not just in the small bits, the odd χVIPλS RENU and CVER MULVENU on the tombstone in Vei, the slashing SELVλNS SλNχUNETλ CVERλ burned into a bidet in Clus—no, far from it. There were extended forms as well, among which is the astounding Spiral Scratch from the TermHouse in Tummling, which galvanized ƀsp that Summer$_2$ of 616, to assemble his loyal [and ill-fated] Pent–Plus at the Closeted Cabal and form the plans for that ultimate wild–χMλÇ Chase, *LastQuest* **Piglet**. Consider the following monument:

---

[5] For High Thefarie, with its five principal points of the compass, this is rather inaccurate, but it's close enough for the point at hand, and I wouldn't want to be picky. More on directions another time...should there be one.

High Thefarie 46



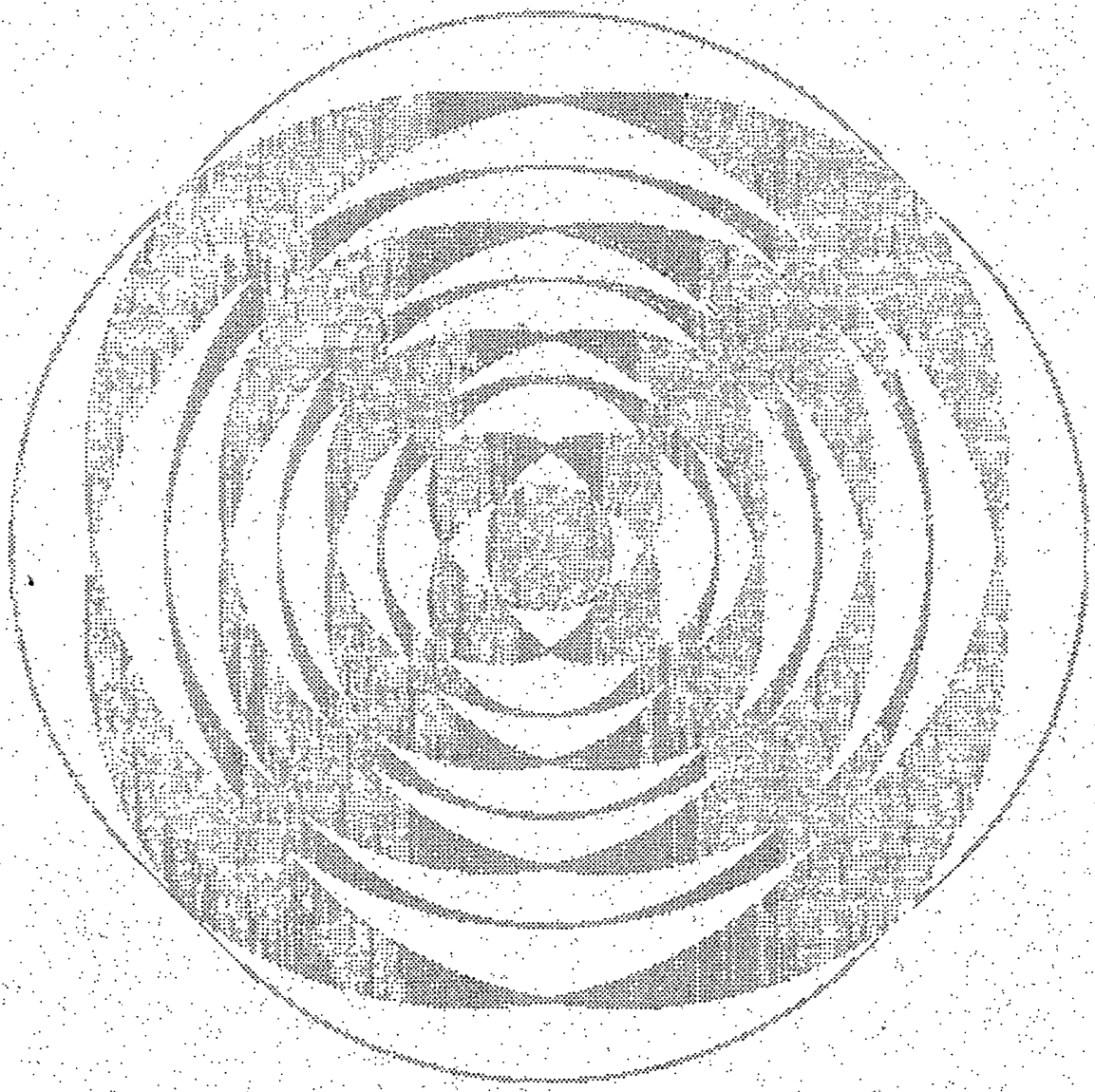
(To decipher: Begin at upper right and read widdershins till center is reached.)

CAUΘAS TUΘIU AVILS ✻✚✚✚ EZ
XIMΘM CASΘIALΘ LACΘ HEVN AVIL
NEÇL MAN MURINAÇIE FALZAΘI
AISERAS IN ECS MENE MLAΘCEMARNI
TUΘI TIU XIMΘM CASΘIALΘ LACΘ
MARIÇL MENITLA AFRS CIALAΘ
XIMΘM AVILSX ECA CEPEN TUΘIU
ΘUX IXUTEVR HEÇNI MULVENI EΘ
ZUCI AM AR

Wondrous, no? The blend of Inflammatory Politics and High Art—when has it ever been better done? The sidewise references to entrenched power and privilege, the vision of the apocalypse to come...and all formed in the spectacular Spiral that practically plots *LastQuest* Piglet! Truly a work of wonder!

Demonstrate this wonder by a critical translation of and commentary on the Spiral Scratch reproduced above. Show how, lurking beneath the seemingly harmless surface meaning, specific political references abound, and identify the persons/places/events referred to. Then give a brief treatment of the piece as High Art—the choice of language, the adaptation of sense to form (or form to sense, as you choose), with some remarks on the significance of the Spiral in High Thefarie. And any other points of interest you think of. Recall—as you will, of course—that one Thefarien word may often be the equivalent of several or more in English.

Little has been said of the *Descent* to The Pit of the Abyss of the WyrmHole itself. What remains, after all? ƀsp was, we take it, *Transfigured*, but only he can know, and his uncertainty is monumental. Under the pressure of SNUJλ ϕ, the Configurations of the WyrmHole frittered and faded, and all he is left with is a dream of a dream, a raddled sense of its pattern that sometimes occurs to him just before waking:

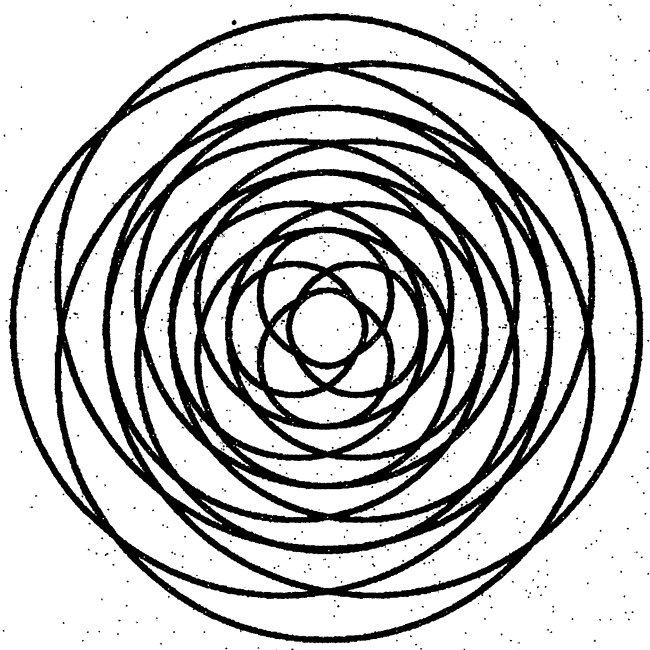


With the insights of the Goshawful Gargle, what boons might ƀsp *not* have accomplished, in that world or in this? But wonders are fragile, even in High Thefarie, and his net impact on The Scheme of Things will be a split tone produced on an ambiguous instrument to mark the [temporary] End of the World.

He blew it.

EPI*LEGOMENON*
to Version 4.0
(meta-ΜΕΤΑ-μετα-REMARKS)

It is not for nothing, Carissimae/i, that the last substantive contribution of this Version concludes with the curious labyrinth given as the "Configurations of the Wyrmhole." View it in another guise:



Rather roundabout, no? Difficult to find your way through, huh? In the RW, it was engendered, quite accidentally, by the mating of four spirals, and presented here because it showed something about the present situation of the Knowledge of High Thefarie as presented in the volume before you.

Briefly, that Knowledge is a mess, an agglomeration of conglomerations—poems, footnotes, hideous puns, lists, lexical freaks, fonts, examination questions, graphics both apt and inept, all interpenetrating, rife with inconsistency. No plan; it just growed—into an unintentional parody of postmodernism at its self-reflexive, deconstructive worst. The Chronology instituted in *Version 2.2* was intended to give the tyro some control over the [then tinier] whole, but now *it's* gotten out of hand, and the guidelines are no more than another sector of the Maze.

This is to inform you that 1990's contributions will be directed to *Consistency* and *Consolidation*. Farewell to random accretion; This Year We've *Got* To Get Organized. Wordlists. Gazetteers. Indices. And, above all, two radical reforms: [1] a judicious *winnowing* of the entire crop, mercilessly ejecting those items—alas, too many—that don't fit; [2] a careful *development* of such items as remain, filling in details, removing them from the dread realm of the hypothetical. By term's end, it'll be a world you and I can be proud of. Oh, yes. Yes, indeedy. You can count on it.

Or perhaps not.

24 August 1990

PREFACE
to Version 5.0

This version ought to embody The Grand Breakthrough, The Ultimate Codification, the Maximal ΩΛΧ of old 0uta 0efariei, raised at last to fiveness, quintessence, penthousery.

Instead, we have a desperate slide for life, an abdication of the fitting resetting, a late distribution and a lick and a promise of revision. I can plead, of course, hideous tribulations, but I always plead those, and, anyway, the plea fools nobody.

So what yawl shall contemplate here, you denizens of the 1991 campaign, is not a revised text, no indeedy, and hardly at all an approach to anything like system, but a quite unassimilated *UpGrade* [sic] to what might as well be termed version 5.0. Said UpGrade consists largely of an approach to The Map and the Troubles of the early XV/620's. That is to say, all the accretions and creations of Fall 1990. And, even as those before yawl, yawl will put it together yourselves. Next year, I've got to get organized. But you know that.

One bit of explanation: In 1990, there were two, count 'em, *two* sections of P/G. One a writing section, even as this; the other, a "theory" section, where the texts were gone into in depth and, god save us all, examined upon. This necessitated rather different Terminal Praxeis, but even the theory people had to cope with High Thefarie. The *writers* were examined on The War Between The Sexes; the *theorists* on that War's climax at The Battle of The Bowre. Hence the proliferation of maps, and charts, and questions. The ID questions were strictly for the writers.

And the whole mess is now for yawl to figure out, assimilate, and participate in during a frenzied three hours at term-end.

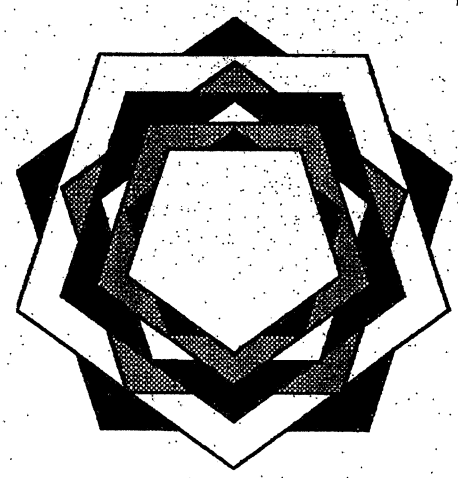
Once upon a time, High Thefarie was a simple place, consisting of ten poems, a rough map, an anecdote about a Waco derelict named Elmo Utterly, and a page of untranslated Sanskrit. But this is not the Spring of 1978, and that world has become much more complex. Even as ours, O Best Beloved. Which means you must scrabble, must improvise omniscience, and all in so little time. Which, of course, is the reason for the delays, the frenzy, the programmed panic. Creation, as yawl must have gathered by now, is rarely if ever a matter of having sufficient time and preparation. *The World Is Off The Wall.*

Especially this word. Nice phrase, that. Here it is in Latin, where the alliteration holds:

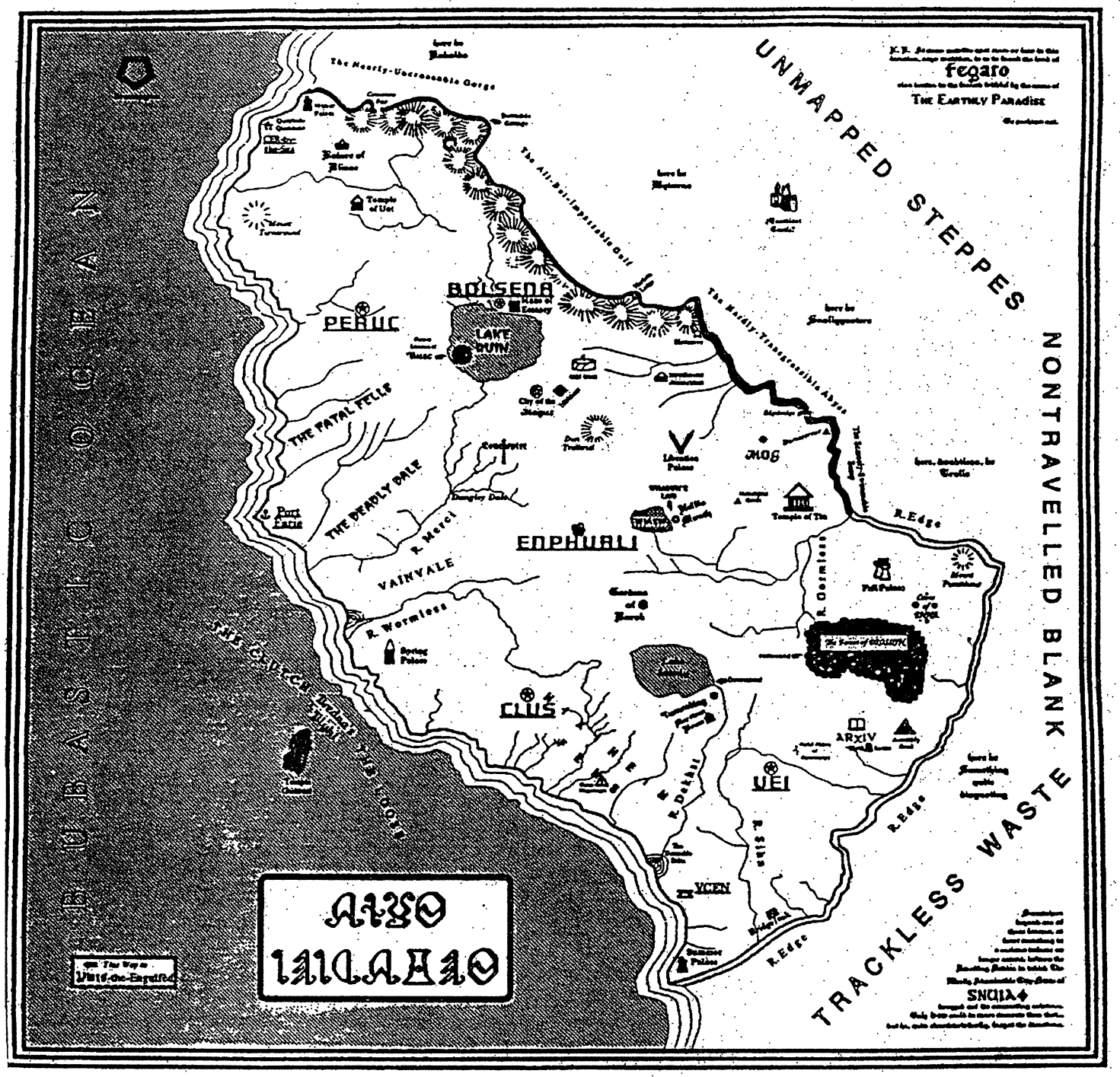
Mundus ex Maceria

A strange way, all this flap, to go to eternity.[1] But necessary flap, or all this wouldn't be here at all. [Don't reflect on that last clause; it could drive yawl mad. As it has me.] Read it in good health.

ƷSQ December, 1991



[1] Or wherever cosmopoets—those who indulge in world-building—go.



A presentation of this item, at this all-but-illegible size, may seem pointless.. *But*, on balance it should be as well to have it around, bound within the body of the SSW [the Slightly Sacred Writings], if only so that the harried seeker after truth may not, at the very moment of achievement, suffer a disturbing lack. Don't bother to thank ðsp; it's the way he was raised. A kind and gentle time, no less. And there should be a usable map in your possession somewhere, anyway.

Chartspiel

Goodness gracious, CARISSIMAE/I, what have we here? Is it—can it possibly be—might one hope—YES! it *is*! The long-heralded, ever-announced and never-appearing

MAP!!!

Imperfect and picayune, of course. Lacking in completeness, certainly. Reft of those very items which you want and need Right Now, without a doubt. But still, take it all in all, it has one inestimable advantage over every other conceivable new chart of High Thefarie, however perfect:

It is...and they ain't. There will be a short pause for applause... [You see? One hand clapping *does* make a sound.]

Now that the tumult has died away, let me descend to specifics:

1. For a variety of dull reasons, the map you receive is—at approximately 1/9 the area of the mother map—both the largest and smallest practical size. Any larger, and it couldn't be handled in a classroom under stress; any smaller, and it couldn't be read; in the configuration before you, both activities can be pursued, albeit with a certain difficulty.
2. It does not take into account various peculiarities of Thefarien space-reckoning: the seemingly random variations in the ZILAC, for instance; the as-yet-impenetrable difficulties of the five-pronged compass; the apparently manic, if not maniac, workings of the phenomenon known to us as HIA/TUS. It will afford you but cold comfort, beset as you are, to be assured that these items will be cleared up in some future edition...therefore, I shall not annoy you with such an assurance.
3. Roads are not indicated. In part—but only in part—this is due to certain uncertainties attendant upon 2 above. [They would also be inevitably confused, at this reduction, with *Rivers*...a not wholly desirable pitfall for the tyro Thefariographer.]
4. *Routes* are not indicated. You will not find here, therefore, the madcap meanderings of the BLB [¿Brave Little Band? ¿Benighted, Lackluster Bumblers?] on LostQuest [¿LastQuest?] **PIGLET**, or Eniaca's Mad Dash, or the Enna Tour, or indeed *any* of the chuffings up, down, and around that so enlivened—to choose a word—ƀsp's stay in the Sacred Precincts.
5. Stark inconsistencies, both typographic and graphic, abound. The semasiological functions of type-size, imperfectly conceived, are even more imperfectly presented...though a fairish fraction of the cartographical solecisms that stud this chart are due to necessary compromises made to achieve readability at such a small scale. Further, no consistent symbolology has yet been devised: How denote a *pleasure-dome*, for example? Again, Your Guide looks to the future...but not the future for this year's adepts, which is very short.
6. Sad to say, there have been *omissions*. Some of these, of course, are due to unavoidable hitches and glitches in ƀsp's ἀνάμνησις—his *rememberative* faculty, our only fount and source for all this folderol. But at least one sizable group of lacks asserts itself and shoves to the front: *Nowhere* will you find depicted or inscribed the main sites of all but the final Principal Operation of The War Between The Sexes of Winter 2, XV/622, sites which, by a positively weird coincidence, had also been the subject of rude and ribald rhyming by Dsp during a failed theatrical tour almost five pentads before—Mauve Wyvern's disastrous GreaseTrap trip of Summer 2, XV/622. This map does not—repeat, DOES NOT—indicate the greedy clutch of avid hamlets [no, not *him;* the tiny towns], tourist traps all, that cluster about the Fruited Plain at the approaches to the Bowre of Blisse to snare the unwary traveler or Mime Troupe...and to furnish, as it happened, an arena for a WAR. Since some of you will be intimately concerned with this conflict very shortly, Steps Are Being Taken to supply you with an adequate, legible map of the Theatre of Conflict [no, not the *Troupe;* the place for the War] on the day that it is required.

To sum up: The Map is both too small and too large; it won't tell you in which direction to go, or how far to go, nor what road to take, nor what route anyone else ever took; you can't reliably figure out even relative size of cities, much less of any and all monuments, nor can you figure out what those monuments are; and it's so damned incomplete that it's missing most of the items that you may need on the single occasion when you'll have to use it.

Quite an achievement, no? Break open the bubbly, gang: I think we've got a hit on our hands.

TURCE MURILA,

ƀsp

Owner and Sole Proprietor
after just a few more payments

THE DIRGE AGAINST THE ROAD

Official Marching Moan of the
Mauve Wyvern Mime Troupe
& Domestic Plumbing Contraction Firm
The GreaseTrap Tour[1]
Summer, XV/599

We gag at a gig at Grimsby
We loathe the thought of Thrope
A clammy spree at Cer-by-the-Sea
Creates no conceivable hope

We don't want a month at i[2]
Or a day at the Dome of Doom
We blanch at one hour of beating the Bowre
We'd rather rot at home

Sing HO! The ROAD!
Where your fingers stick
And your bathwater clots
And the roaches all have colds
Where your pillows prick
And your tongue shows spots
And your nose grows bumpy and molds

We won't spread cots at Cmfwyp
Or parade the plage at Plunge
Or pose for a peep at Clystered Weep
Or writhe in the wallows at Grunge

We'll tread no boards at Strifling
We'll post no bills at Groomb
We'll kill no king[3] at Spinster's Fling
We'd rather rot at home

Sing HO! The ROAD!
Where your audience shoves

---

[1] This has become the traditional term for it, given the absolute disaster attendant upon that play's—and the Troupe's—final performance. But it should be remembered that the Troupe was doing repertory, with at least 25 items it could perform. Not well, perhaps, but adequately for rubes on The Fruited Plain. It wasn't till Brummagem that things fell apart.

[2] i = a perfectly miserable and utterly boring village with the Forbidden Name of *Megillah*. It figures.

[3] A stock feature of most basic BarrowPlays, not, however, found in any surviving text of GreaseTrap.

And your shirts go black
And things come out of the spout
Where your breakfast moves
And your tendons slack
And your spit dries up and out

We'll finesse the crypt at Crodslatch
We'll miss the mounds at Lamorgue
We'll thumb our crotch[4] at the Nederheim Notch
And the Spiky Shrine at Sorgue

We won't chuck coins at Trollpool
Or rappel the Funambel Flume
Or swill like fools at Essenschule
We'd rather rot at home

Sing HO! The ROAD!
Where your raincapes leak
And your armpits itch
And leeches lurk in the sink
Where your earlobes flake
And your blankets scratch
And even the roses stink[5]

---

[4] A gesture—not widespread, but nonetheless *very* vulgar—expressing extreme disapprobation, this was also known, at least to members of the Troupe, as "Flicking the Wyvern."

[5] These verses were shamelessly adapted by ƀsp—a longstanding self-plagiarist—a few years later, during the waning days of the PENTAPOLY Craze of XV/603, in a pitiful ploy to pander to popular fancy:

THE PLAINT AGAINST PENTAPOLY

We'll fare no more to Enphurli
Officialdom's had its day
The government bureaus make us neúrose
And glad to lose our way

We'll beat no path to Bolsena
We ain't no bloody saints
We get no ease from blistered knees
And unrestrained constraints

We'll make no voyage to Vé-i
We've sluffed our mourning rig
So much en-graving can send us raving
And digging's infra dig

Perúç we'll plod no pike to
We lack the Common Touch
Since who can stand the land of the bland
Where enough is way too much

To Clus no cliffs we'll clamber
The entertainment's too rough
The ersatz sex is slimy with taxes
The fun spots won't rub off

The game's not worth the efforts
When life goes into eclipse
Strain and HIA/TUS switch us and bait us
No crown is worth five trips

Sing BOO! The GAME!
Where the hostels seethe
And they serve you crud
And nobody shares your load
Where it's hard to breathe
And the roads are mud
And pedestrians have to be towed

There being some justice in worlds, even the world of High Thefarie, the song failed miserably.

from the

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT on the Terminal Praxis, 1990

Carissimi/ae–

December again? So soon? Facing the Ultimate Undersling yet once more? Devising, ever devising, still another Maddening Maze of Ecstacy for the foolish faithful to tread? Waiting, in shuddering anticipation, for the Oh-Are, the Onset of Rhetoric to get me somehow out of this and you somehow into it? Where have all those potentially productive hours flown, why am I still, yet, always, ever and ever, wrestling with the Highly Improbable to do my shtick?

I mean, you don't need this; you already have it. It's all here, in the Purple Patches that stud the text above, to which I now commend your eager attention. There shall you receive solace, encouragement, and maybe even some information. There the scam, there the spiel, there the shill...but here, merely the information. Take careful note of the following Points of Really Basic Importance concerning the Long Questions for this year:

NOTICE!!!

Ever solicitous of your welfare, Your Guide has pronounced in class the Eff-Cee, or Fatal Commitment: This year's Terminal Praxis will concern itself with the ins, outs, down, and arounds of:

The War Between the Sexes!

Not the RW conflict, of course, a titanic *tsurris* that must have begun in the primæval ooze and continues, in the infinite variety of perpetual parry and theatheleth thrutht, down to—and doubtless beyond—our own day. No, this is that purely Thefarien hassle of Winter 2, XV/622, a set-to set off by Eniaca's Mad Dash from the Winter Palace to Tummling [to Marzipan House, actually], set forth in the Tiny Hamlets and Such on the Fruited Plain, and set down in the epochal Battle of the Bowre, an upset that resulted in Dsp's incarceration for a pent of pents at Ywis in Spring 1, XV/623. Questions, then, will be drawn from the following areas:

The War—Its Causes: *The Breakdown in Sexual Communication in Late-XV*

The War—Its Concepts: *War of Force or War of Ideas?*

The War—Its Catchwords: *Propaganda Supreme*

The War—Its Clothes: *Transexual Uniforms or Uniform Transsexuals?*

The War—Its Cadres: *Improvised Organization and Tactics in Nonce-Armies*

The War—Its Course: *Around and Around the Fruited Plain*

One note to set your minds at rest: You are, of course, uneasily aware that the conflict, culminating at the Battle of the Bowre, took place mostly in that area, *and* that you have only the sketchiest map of the place, a map which says nothing of such important places as: Grimsby, Thrope, the Dome of Doom, Cmfwyp, Plunge, Clystered Weep, Grunge, Strifling, Groomb, Spinster's Fling, Crodslatch, Lamorgue, the Nederheim Notch, Sorgue, Trollpool, the Funambel Flume, and Essenschule. Never Fear: Help is On the Way. You will be provided with at least one detail map of the area, and possibly more. For they will be needed, O Best Beloved: Answers to *any* of the questions will demand constant reference to Place and Places.

Identification Lists
from the Terminal Praxis, 1990

Ohdearohdearohdearohdear! These and other less polite vocables were on Your Guide's Tongue as he began the formulation of the section and sat in rapt contemplation of the mistakes of his past, marveling at the construction of the truly magnificent corner into which he had not only painted, but also immured and locked himself. It was a prospect to turn the hardiest hair: The following topics, by virtue of their prior use, were summarily excluded from the ID lists for this year, 1990: People, Sayings, Places [primarily Buildings], Events, Geographical Anomalies, Occupations, Documents, Groups, Micromaps, Gestures, Architectural Inscriptions, Flora, and Fauna. "Don't leave much uncovered, do it?" He recognized the voice of his Worser Self, or Worself, speaking from the deep hack into which it had voluntarily retired when it realized that Your Guide's Better Motives could cause ten times the toruble that it could. "Look, me bucko, you're in a rush. Whyncha try repeatin one? They'll never know." Guide paled, and bit a knuckle to mask his guilty fascination with the idea. Before him glimmered a vision of TIME—Time UnFettered, Time UnObligated, Time to Think Before Writing. What if...but No. He squelched the Worself with a simple if painful thought, turned to the Mac, and wrote firmly:

A.1: CHILDREN'S TOYS

ðsp, by virtue of his reconstitution just shy of his 18th birthday, missed a normal Thefarien childhood.[1] But he did learn something of it during his career as doting parent...as doting as the Custom of the Country allowed, that is. [It may be noted here that Thefarien younglings were not so much spoilt as allowed to rot on their own; it gave them *tone*, the natives averred.] In particular, he became familiar with—though not favorably inclined to—the rather disturbing panoply[2] of playthings so dear to the heart of every Thefarien tot. Folktoys all, handmade all, they yet demonstrated that High Thefarie, though it had not really yet attained to the mysteries of mass production, still was second to no RW nation, no matter how advanced, in the positively demonic manipulation of its young through objects cunningly insinuated into their affections during their Tender Years. Just as you have often thought, **O Carissimi/ae.**

Demonstrate the breath and depth of your knowledge of and speculation on ludic phenomena by identifying and describing, quite *BRIEFLY*, 3 (THREE) of the following 12 (TWELVE) selections from the aforesaid panoply. Give the provenience if you wish. But DO comment briefly on the *socializing* effect (let's call it that) of each toy on its inevitably unsophisticated owner. Be sure to indicate the sex for which each toy is designed.

1. TankerToes
2. ¡The Gouger!
3. Snarks & Loaders
4. Shack-in-the-Box
5. The Deal Doll
6. Lards of the Universe
7. Pat the χλçϖλχ
8. The Awry Orrery
9. Sally Porty
10. Booby & Cain
11. Baby's First Still
12. PlyDo

---

[1] His childhood in the RW, however, was stupefyingly normal. As American, in fact, as apple pie—a commodity that was rather too frequently in evidence for his subsequent well-being.

[2] He *knows* that "panoply" means a collection of arms and armor. He stands by his word-choice.

A.2: SIGNS & SYMBOLS

Even the most experienced—not to say jaded—Thefariologist shudders and starts now and then, struck once more by the realization that these beings are Not As We are, that They Are **OTHER**.[3] They *look* so human, really, and, come down to it, *act* so human as well. Never mind that their superficies conceals an oviparous reproductive system, and that their simplest move, however prosaic, however humanoid, proceeds from a congeries of motives absolutely inconceivable to us Earth-bound types. It has been proven that we can interbreed[4] and get along pretty well;[5] why—as the philosophers say—sweat it? But one has only to assemble the least bitlets of evidence from that fabled otherwhere to realize that We Wouldn't Do It This Way, no matter what farflung non-mainstreamers "We" is construed to include. Who can understand the mental workings of beings to whom ♂ indicates "insert operator here" and ♀ stands for "you never loved me"?[6] However. Nevertheless. Still. For such understanding, try we must...or rather, try *You* must, **O Carissmi/ae,** in attending to the first category here, which has just been cleverly introduced by Your canny Guide: The Signs and Symbols of High Thefarie, constituting as they did an ideographic shorthand which dotted walls, splattered hoardings, studded overgarments, and was even found, among the more conservative members of society, distributed about the person in tattoos, whether permanent, longlasting, or ephemeral.[7] As usual, you know all this. And so, in the normal course of things of this course, **Carissmae/i,** you shall regurgitate part of it to me.

> Below are printed 11 (ELEVEN) of the common signs/symbols most frequently encountered in Late-XV High Thefarie, and 1 (ONE) which, though from the same period, is/was quite unusual—in fact, absolutely recherché. Choose 3 (THREE). Of these, one must be Personal (ideally, a tattoo), one of the style Official-Restricted (that is, not to be found throughout HT, but limited to one area), and one from the Official-Ubiquitous category (more than likely to occur everywhere, very probably promulgated by TPTB). One of these three should also be the unusual, not to say rare, specimen noted above. Identify and describe each *BRIEFLY* as to Meaning, Locale (i.e., area of HT (if applicable)), Location (i.e., where placed), Date, Material (if pertinent), and Importance. Prime among the items to be covered under Importance is, of course, at least one specific instance where Dsp encountered the Sign/Symbol in question. But equally, or even more important is your use of these to, well, *symbolize* the Thefariens' *otherness.* Should one chance to look like anything in the RW, rest assured that *that* is what it *isn't.*

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[3] Hardly, of course, in the horrifying fashion that the use of this font might imply. But it's difficult, even in these days of oribiting, computer-induced typographical proliferation and sophistication, to secure a font which indicates intellectual alienation accompanied by a slight-but-marked visceral *frisson.* Possibly a Cyrillic-based font entitled OSTRANENJE? Maybe there's something around and available, now that the Cold War's over.

[4] To judge from one instance, or rather, the five children born from that instance: the **ȣsp**/Eniaca union. All candor must force the admission that this is not the best grounds for a generalization: We know nothing of the hybrids, if any, that might issue from the conjuction of human female with Thefarien male. The only recorded candidate—the Lady Ed, Cyclist of XIV—stayed in High Thefarie for a remarkably short time, and appears to have had other things to do, than couple.

[5] Again, the one instance. And **ȣsp**, in his cups, has been known to aver that a relationship which involves five divorces, three highly inflammable pamphlets, a peremptory duel challenge, and one war [including a drastic Ritual Slanging] is rather inadequately filed under "Getting Along Pretty Well." Even in High Thefarie.

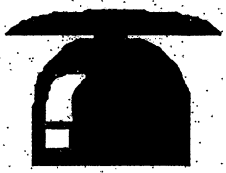
[6] Hideously insufficient translation, of course; they always are. The ♀ is found in court reports—known as "offal"—to indicate the formulaic statements attendant upon the Fourth Divorce. The mass of expostulation indicated is much less anguished and more anatomical than the English rendering implies.

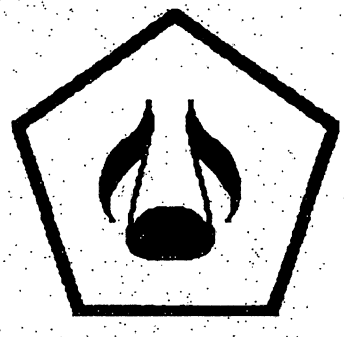
[7] Meeni, **ȣsp** thinks it was, had a tricolored ✱ prominently displayed right in the middle of her...but he digresses. He will say, however, that he always thought it a most curious location for a standard bibliographical reference.

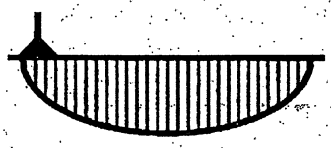
Oh. A Brace of Points: a. Do recall that None (0) of the Twelve have anything at all to do with The War Between the Sexes of XV/622. b. Allow Your respectful Guide to reiterate down here that none of these indicators have anything to do with their RW counterparts. Visual puns are an occupational hazard of those who operate between two cultures, and must be resisted.

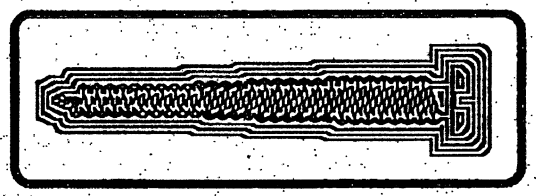
1.

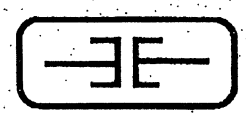
2.

3. 

4. 

5. 

6 

7. 

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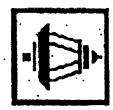
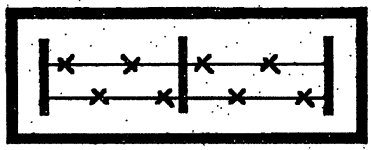
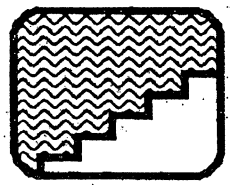
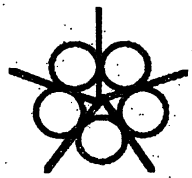
9. 

10. 

11. 

12. 

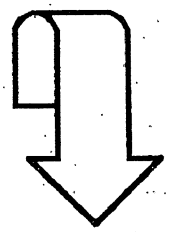
LONG QUESTIONS
from the Terminal Praxis, 1990

The War Between The Sexes

It was, of course, a lovely little war: *Lovely* in its art: it observed the prescribed pattern for internecine conflict almost down to the letter[1]; *Little* in its dimensions: neither side was able to muster forces of more than 5^4 combatants on the best days of fighting, of which there were barely more than 5^2. And Lovely *and* Little in the way place and personnel shrank almost obligingly to bring about the epochal Battle of the Bowre with its final single-combat stage.[2] But, for all that its micropolemic nature, It Was A WAR, and has thus deserved your interest, O Best Beloved. We shall not look on its like again. But, boy, shall we look at it *now*.

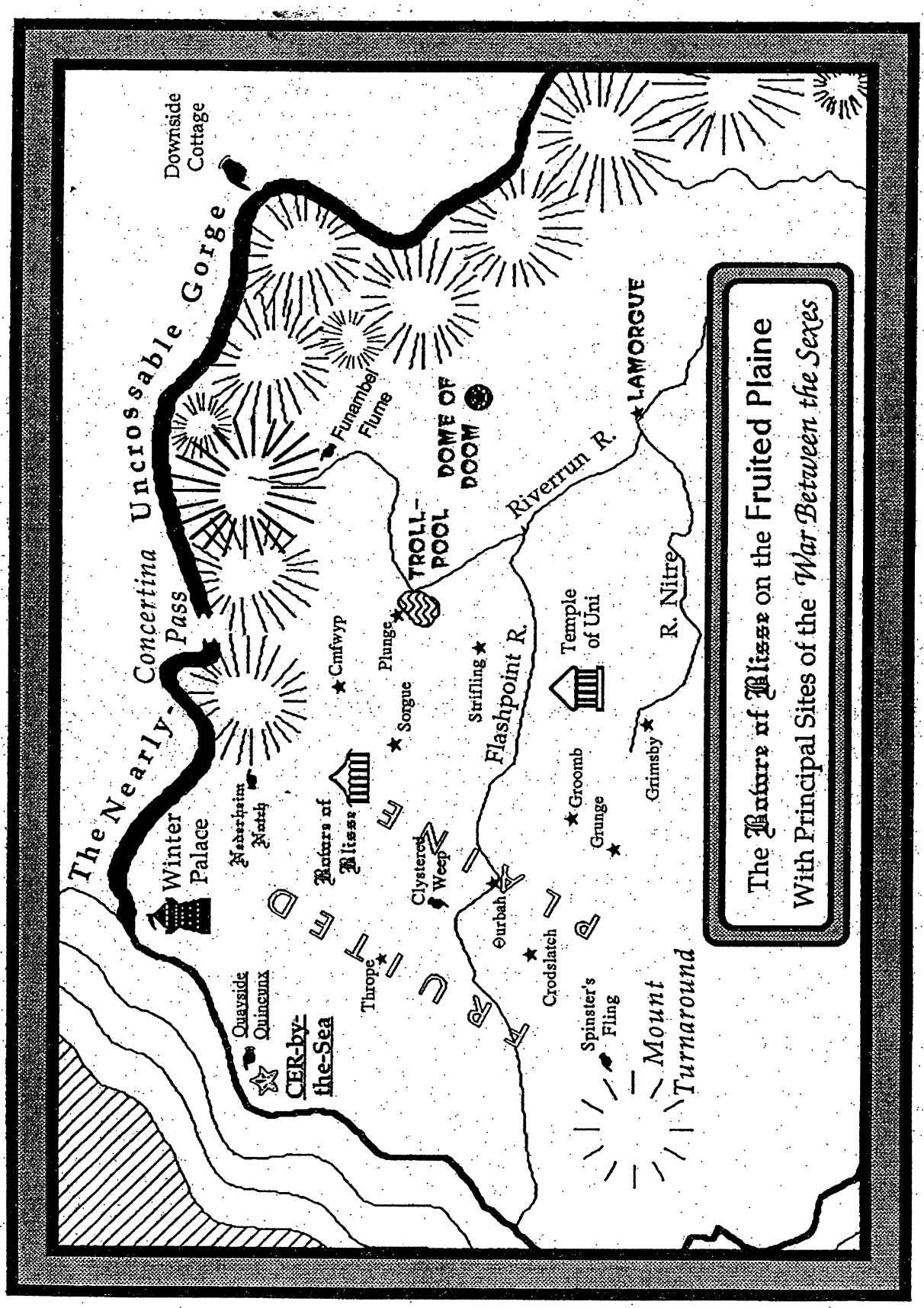
NB: Before and while answering the Questions, peruse carefully the map of the theatre of War, which you will find, if you follow the arrow, overleaf—or at least on the next page—below, anyway—noting that it does NOT, repeat NOT, repeat NOT in itself indicate anything about the War at all.
It is merely a section of your Basic Map, that which would like to the far NW by N, if only the benighted inhabitants had reckoned direction in any rational fashion. They did not, of course. But it should be easy to figure out. And, as you will note, it ties in most remarkably with The Dirge Against The Road, HT 48.

As also on the Basic Map, distances (mutable, due to the workings of HIA/TUS), are not indicated. Neither are roads. Otherwise, quite a useful map.



[1] What letter, you may ask? Well, in the Thefarien alphabet, it works out to about a Θ.

[2] The Battle of the Bowre, of course, is not your concern. It has recently been treated quite exhaustively. *Recently?* Last Friday. *Exhaustively?* Your threescore compatriots in ParaGeography had at it in their Final Examination. The Materials—at least the Guide to the Bowre and its Key—should accompany this screed in an appendix, or something.


The Nearly-Concertina Uncrossable Gorge
Downside Cottage
Winter Palace
Nederheim Notch
Nature of Blisse
Cmfwyp
Plunge
Sorgue
Clystered Weep
Thrope
Quayside Quincunx
CER-by-the-Sea
Funambel Flume
DOME OF DOOM
TROLL-POOL
Riverrun R.
LAMORGUE
Strifling
Flashpoint R.
Temple of Uni
R. Nitre
Groomb
Grunge
Grimsby
Ourbah
Crodslatch
Spinster's Fling
Mount Turnaround
FRUITED PLAINE
The Nature of Blisse on the Fruited Plaine
With Principal Sites of the War Between the Sexes

I. It was, of course, a lovely little war... The two sexes, of course, express themselves differently...but in the same words. **ðsp**, in his admittedly biased and downright deceitful account of the war's beginning [HT 28, p;.46-7], puts the source of the War Between the Sexes down to Eniaca's misreading of a pamphlet improbably titled THAT WAS NO LADLE, THAT WAS MY KNIFE, but the world knows the minimal truth-content of *that* account...though, actually, the world doesn't, not really. It is up to you to relate the whole ridiculous mess.

> Tell the real, the untold tale of the Casus Belli, from Eniaca's point of view, noting that all might yet have been avoided had it not been for the Grimy Encounter at Grimsby, which provoked the Ensuing Foofaraw, which...but why am I doing your work for you? Cite at length at least one of Eniaca's documents on the sordid subject. Trace the Foofaraw, if necessary.

II. It was, of course, a lovely little war...and even, though lapidary in the tiny, subtle facets it presents to the student of polemology, it was the result of a Big Idea whose time had come...and, indeed, *gone*, long before the conflict that it engendered had gotten much of a start, leaving the bemused, indeed stricken, participants to soldier on to the bitter end. It was, to be quite accurate about it, a war of many Big Ideas, none of which stayed around to be tested, but all of which contributed to the disturbance.

> Pick 3 (THREE) of the Big Ideas, the lofty generalities for which the small armies were fighting and dying, and show their various applications to what was, in the last analysis, a disturbing physical set-to. You might include: Reason, Religion, Freedom, Equality, Double-Entry Bookkeeping, or any of the others...just so long as you detail their impact on the landscape. Don't forget to cite from at least one contemporary document.

III. It was, of course, a lovely little war...possessed of a content of sheer bitterness and spleen that has rarely been matched in infinitely larger, more universal conflicts. This derived, doubtless, from its well-nigh *personal* origins: We must never forget that individuals are really much easier to hate than groups, the evidence of racism to the contrary. And Wars, of course, *proper* Wars, require villains to serve as foci for communal animus, to unite the splayed hatreds of one side into a healthy, productive loathing for the other. Nowhere is this better seen than in the Ritual Slanging at Cmfwyp early in the War, where Eniaca and **ðsp** teed off on one another in a series of vituperative invectives that galvanized their forces As **ðsp** claimed later, he didn't expect to come out of it smelling like a Rose [rough translation; but never mind]; but hardly anticipated slinking away redolent with the stench of a Chthonic Jacketch. To have each of his shortcomings delineated, in detail, for the presumed information and undoubted delight of the inhabitants of the hamlet of Cmfwyp...well, that was more than a bit much. As you know.

> Give the particulars of the Ritual Slanging at Cmfwyp, which ended in the utter ruin of at least one admittedly shaky reputation and of a rather charming—if unpronouceable—village. Give the particulars of at least one, well, Bill of Particulars. Trace Cmfwyp's devastation into the surrounding countryside.

IV. It was, of course, a lovely little war...in fact, it was downwright *charming*. Puce culottes, of course, may not strike us as the proper underpinnings for a male army, even such a pickup army as the ragtag-and-bobtail mob that **ðsp** assembled at Tummling that snowy week, but they fit well within the Thefariens' dominant culture-pattern, which prescribed cross-dressing for most public functions—notably, among the areas of experience covered by The Yellow Book, the drama. **ðsp** may have been grossly out of shape, but he had been an actor of some standing, and carried the pose off fairly well. Of course, there was the incident at Strifling, where he nearly choked on his wig. And his bustier did keep slipping down. It must be admitted that Eniaca, trim as ever, cut a much better figure in her stylishly baggy...well, let's call it a sack suit. But neither the two wore what we would call *normal* costumes.

Comment at length on the nature, specifics, and effects of the improvised battle garb of the two armies, and show how this seemingly minor item (viewed against Grand Strategy, that is) had more than a little to do with the War's outcome; not to forget the sad straits into which it cast the population around Thrope, and indeed as far seaward at Cer. If you have time, discourse on the colorful, if overly skimpy, native costume at Sorgue and the confusion it produced among both sides, and speculate on the causes of Dsp's utter lack of acumen—and, indeed, of clothes sense—in outfitting himself for the field outside town.

V. It was, of course, a lovely little war...managing, in spite of its size, to effect serious inroads on the three fundamental Thefarien—and, indeed, human—necessities: (1) Food, (2) Structure, and (3) Sex. Most native commentators on the Thefarien psyche specified them in that order, thus tempering our amazement at what we like to think of as "essential humanity" with uneasiness at what we regard as the inversion of items (2) and (3). But we might well rethink our priorities. If the SexWar's pent of pents teaches us anything, it is this: Potentially ravening dedicated heterosexuals can endure a great while of enforced starvation and celibacy without complaining...but they absolutely *have* to know who's in charge, and where they, single individuals, Fit Into The Scheme of Things.

Utilize official documents and your staggering knowledge to present the, well, the ideal picture, the structure if you will, of two most unprofessional armies, and show the hideous results, especially in the Mountain Expeditions and the double disaster at Nederhelm Notch. And do try to answer the fundamental Questioun here: Who was in charge? What good did it do?

VI. It was, of course, a lovely little war, pursuing its limited development round and round the almost intimate confines, warwise, of the Fruited Plaine, touching on what proved to be a really suprising variety of landscape and dangers. As has been said, we shall not—if the gods are merciful—look upon its like again.

Trace its principal operations of the War Between the Sexes, with particular attention to the patterns described, all unwittingly, by the armies, who missed as often as they clashed. Diagram and describe at least one battle: The Flume would be nice, but is by no means mandatory. Liven your account with intimate encounters and hitherto unpublished, or at least not widely known, documents. Figure out, if you can, what strange concatenation of events managed to lead two equally weak forces to the sublime inappropriateness of the Bowre of Blisse. Discourse, if you wish, on War as a Moral Substitute for Marriage.

QUESTION
from the Ultimate Examination, 1990

The BATTLE at Ye Bowre of Blisse

The Bowre of Blisse might best be seen as a combination of theme park [though the Thefariens would not have comprehended the term], holy precinct, courtship manual, allegorical landscape, and concretized fertility ritual [ðsp's term for it once, on suffering a very painful fall from the Gazebo]. With all these loads of significance, it still managed to be a rather pleasant place, save on the fell Fiveday in Winter$_2$, XV/622, when The War Between the Sexes came to its ridiculous, but utterly final, conclusion. And that fell Fiveday, the day of The Battle of the Bowre, is the subject of your Ultimate Examination.

You have been supplied below with a diagram of the Bowre. Not of the Battle, but of the Bowre. The numbered spots are, of course, the principal attractions of that fabled spot...but not tourist attractions. Oh, my, no. These are the points to be touched by initiates...whether they attained to the mystic joy of the Gestummelte Gazebo by the Right, or odd route, or the left, or even. Each place with its own *frisson*, some delicate and some...well, not so delicate. But I digress; why do I go on telling you things you know?

And yet, to jog your memory, I have supplied you with a key to the NINETEEN STATIONS.

YOUR TASK TODAY is *not* to set forth the wellknown attractions in the Bowre; such would be child's play, unworthy of a Great Event such as this. No, indeed. You shall rather delineate the five last stages of the Final Battle of the War Between the Sexes, where certain of those attractions found themselves employed, by a mad historical irony, in the deadly struggle between those two groups of, well, humanity which it had ever been the Bowre's function to, er, bring together. What accident of fate it was that brought the tattered remnants of both sides in the SexWar together in this of all places, what joking destiny it was that pitted the lone leaders, Eniaca Omniversant and ðsp, together in the ultimate stage of the Final Battle, what deviousness of determinism...well, such is not your concern. You, of course are to:

Take the Five (5) Final & Canonical Stages of the Final Battle in Ye Bowre of Blisse:

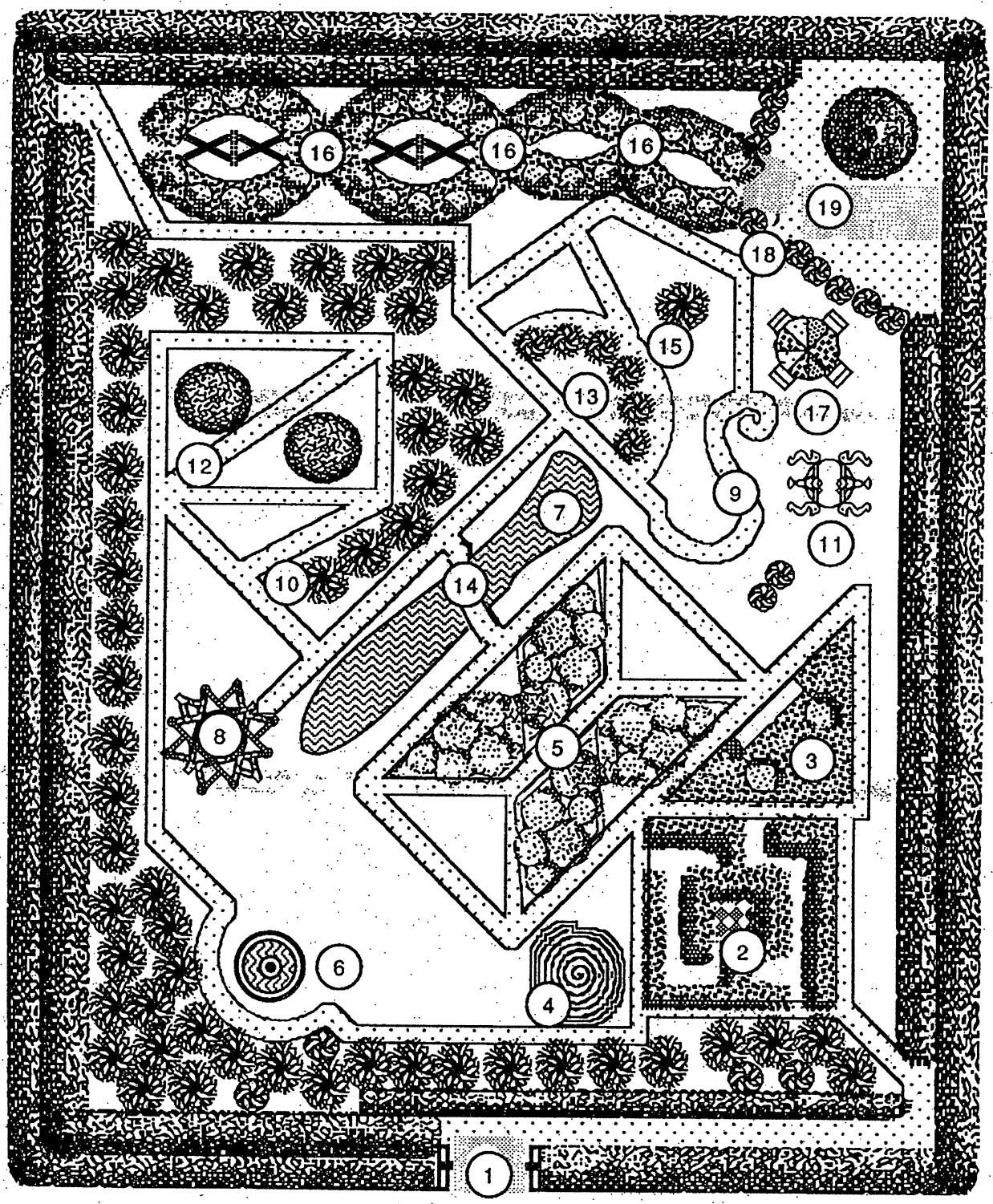
Entailment
Encroachment
Entrapment
Enchantment
Endgame

Assign each stage of the conflict to its highly ironical place on the diagram supplied, and tell briefly what it was, and why ironical. For TWO (2) of the stages, Endgame and one (1) other, Go Into Detail. Return the diagram with your examination booklet.

TURCE MURILA,

ðsp

SITE of the BATTLE of Ye Bowre of Blisse



aka The Libidinous Landscape

KEY to the PRINCIPAL ATTRACTIONS

[It was truly remarkable, opined ðsp—a great opiner, by the way—how the established nicknames of existing topographical phenomena proved to be quite accurate, if skewed, summaries of what occurred in each during the Battle itself. But Ye Bowre had ever been the place for *double-entendres*—where better?]

1. The Bi-Gated Entrance, giving, of course, on the highly magnificent esplanade and the utter profusion of lubricious cyclopean statuary, none of it indicated here.
2. The Minor Maze of Introduction.
3. The Pauserie that Refleshes.
4. The Wetted [¿Whetted?] Whirl.
5. The Casual Inspectory, also know as the Lair of the Lozenges.
6. The Passionate Plong [as in Faerye, the 'g' is soft] (so is the Plong, in fact)
7. The Rivulet of Rapture, or Inlet of Indulgence. [query: what is it an inlet *from?*]
8. The Dungeon at the DeadEnd.
9. The Sinuous Slither.
10. The Waited-At Corner.
11. The Piped Raunch.
12. The Machinatory Position.
13. The Sensual Snuggery.
14. The Cautious FootBridge over the Rivulet.
15. The Lone FileTree.
16. The Gross Allées.
17. The Tête-à-Tête-à-Tête-à-Tête.
18. The Narrow Defiling.
19. The Bowre Improper, replete with the Gestummelte Gazebo.

[Nicknames all, bringing a leer to the lips of the instructed. Oh, for shame!]

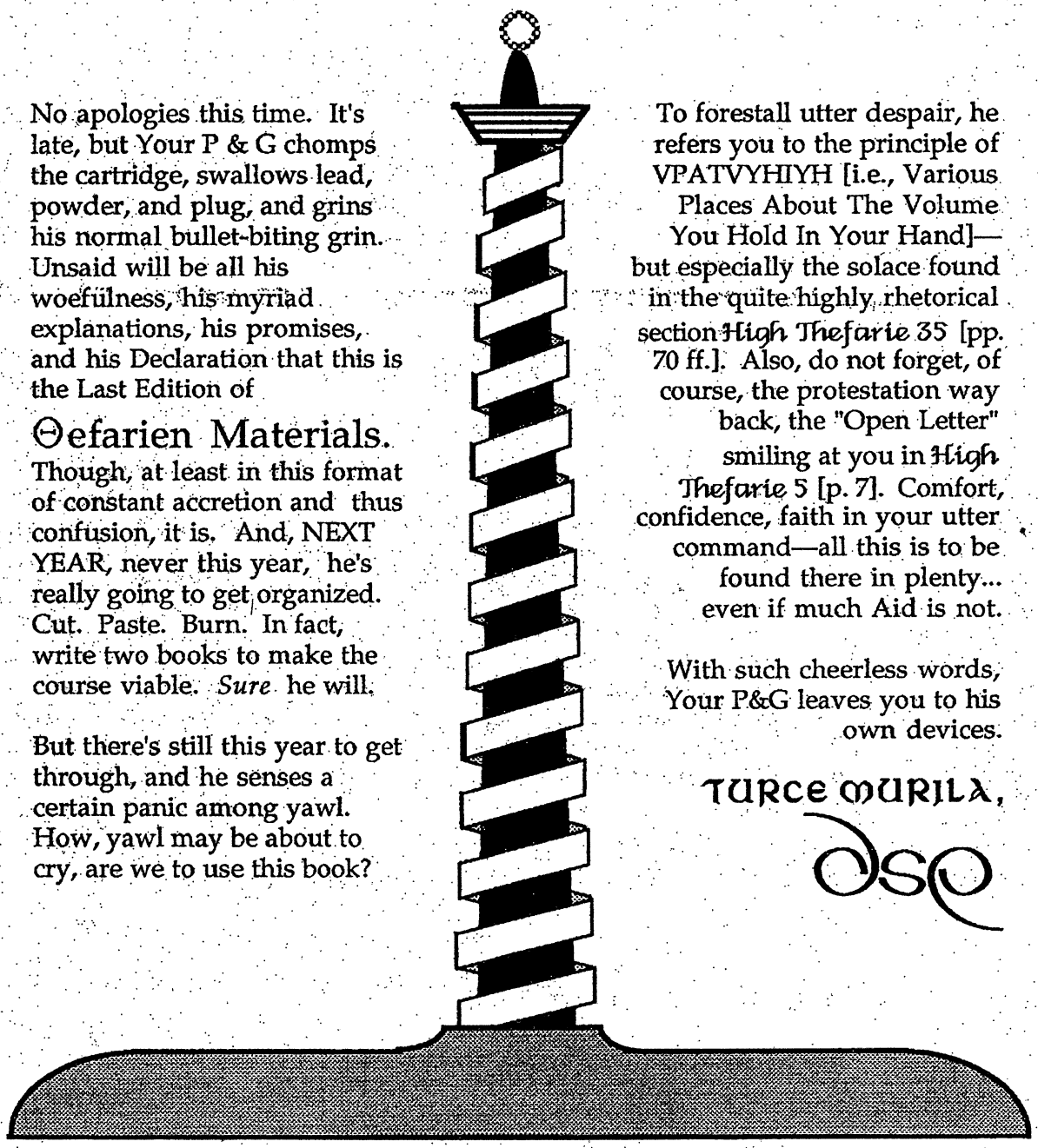
Preface to VERSION 6.1

No apologies this time. It's late, but Your P & G chomps the cartridge, swallows lead, powder, and plug, and grins his normal bullet-biting grin. Unsaid will be all his woefulness, his myriad explanations, his promises, and his Declaration that this is the Last Edition of

Θefarien Materials.

Though, at least in this format of constant accretion and thus confusion, it is. And, NEXT YEAR, never this year, he's really going to get organized. Cut. Paste. Burn. In fact, write two books to make the course viable. *Sure* he will.

But there's still this year to get through, and he senses a certain panic among yawl. How, yawl may be about to cry, are we to use this book?



To forestall utter despair, he refers you to the principle of VPATVYHIYH [i.e., Various Places About The Volume You Hold In Your Hand]—but especially the solace found in the quite highly rhetorical section High Thefarie 35 [pp. 70 ff.]. Also, do not forget, of course, the protestation way back, the "Open Letter" smiling at you in High Thefarie 5 [p. 7]. Comfort, confidence, faith in your utter command—all this is to be found there in plenty... even if much Aid is not.

With such cheerless words, Your P&G leaves you to his own devices.

TURCE MURILA,

OSO

Lonespire

from the

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT
on the Terminal Praxis, 1991

Carissimae/i–

It keeps coming around.

I mean, the necessity for year-end Rhetoric, for a highflown fanfaron of words to pipe you aboard the ultimate sloop as it slouches toward the horizon. Something about getting you in the mood.

Not that yawl really need mood music. The panic level compares favorably with past years; there were levels of frustrated intensity last Tuesday that delighted my conoisseur's sensibilities. I must watch out, of course, for my [really undeserved] reputation as a pedagogical pussycat, some complaisant academic Garfield who is all purr and no claw. Now hear this: I am ðsp, the Great and Terrible, possessed to the power to hurl you, one and all, to a Gehenna of my choice for the slightest infraction of what are—I confess it—purely arbitrary rules and regulations; I damn and destroy at my whim; trrrremble!

Pay no attention to that professor behind the curtain...but *do* pay attention to the following...

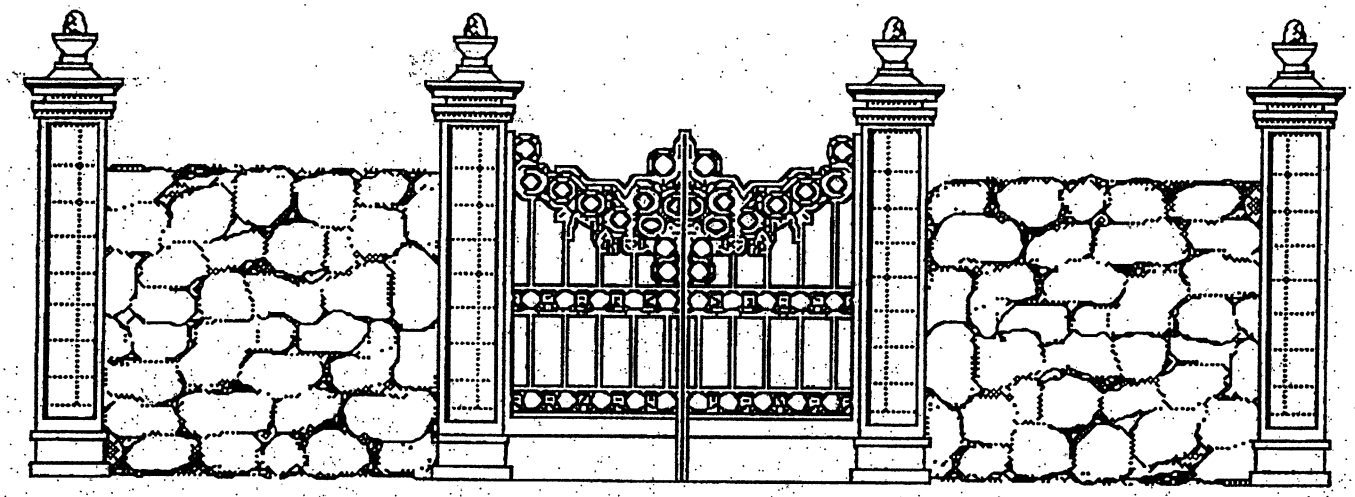
NOTICE!!!

Ever solicitous of your welfare, Your Guide here pronounces in class the Eff-Cee, or Fatal Commitment: This year's Terminal Praxis will concern itself with the ins, outs, down, and arounds of the city of Clus. As you well know, it was hardly ðsp's favorite spot, but sported [there is no other verb] for him more than a tinge of absolutely ineluctable futility. At age 22 in 577, he underwent the trauma of his first VeLχeS, or honeymoon, in those purlieus, and bore the scars for the rest of his life, especially through his relationship[s] with Eniaca, whom the mere name of SAL CLUVIeNAS, "Sal from Clus," could still send into a towering rage nearly fifty years later. Also, the unexpectedly violent reception of his lecture on the History of Drama at the Cluvian Men's Institute in 598 left him battered and bruised almost beyond recognition, burning to Get Out Of Town, even to Go On Tour. But what you are to consider is the Clus of another time, the Clus in which ðsp toiled and failed in his early 30's, from his arrival after the Enna Tour in mid-585 until the crash of *Worlds in Collusion* in 587, through his checkered string of underachievements as world-builder, spy, fulltime voluptuary, and CAΘ knows what else.

And *yawl*, too, know what else, O Best Beloved. Which is why yawl will dig into your memory and expound, come Praxis-time, on that justly fabled hideyhole for the baser passions of High Thefarie...

[Let's hear it loud!]

The PLEASURE-CITY of CLUS!



The Pleasure-Port, Clus[1]

[DELIVERIES IN REAR]

Every land of repression, and all lands are such, needs a safety-valve, a mauve-light district, a spot for the the unspeakable to take place. The ancient Greeks had Corinth; we have Paris, or Vegas, or—for some—even Austin; the Thefariens had Clus. A city of infinite variety, which prehistorically had picked up the slack—and slack it was, very—when Bolsena went under, which brandished its triumphant ticklestick at the moralists and provided It All...at a price, of course. As you will proceed to show in your treatment of anything and everything about that city in the turbulent late-mid 580's. You know, of course, all there is to know about it, the structure of the city, its government, its architecture, its sociology, its admittedly rather disgusting insights into the human heart. And, of course, you know all there is to about the most disgusting human heart in the place in those years, that of ȣsp. Fish out of water isn't the term; I mean, what did that miserable *poseur* know about pleasure, joy, or fun? *Dour Dionysius;* they called him, and they were right. Oh, so right. Better he should have been....

But no. I shall not let petty concerns foul the pure matter of this notice, much as I ache to. Simply let me say that you will receive, to facilitate your Long Answer, a map of Clus (including the Labyrinth), a detail map of the surrounding territory, and Seven [7] Questions which will involve...

Please don't interrupt.

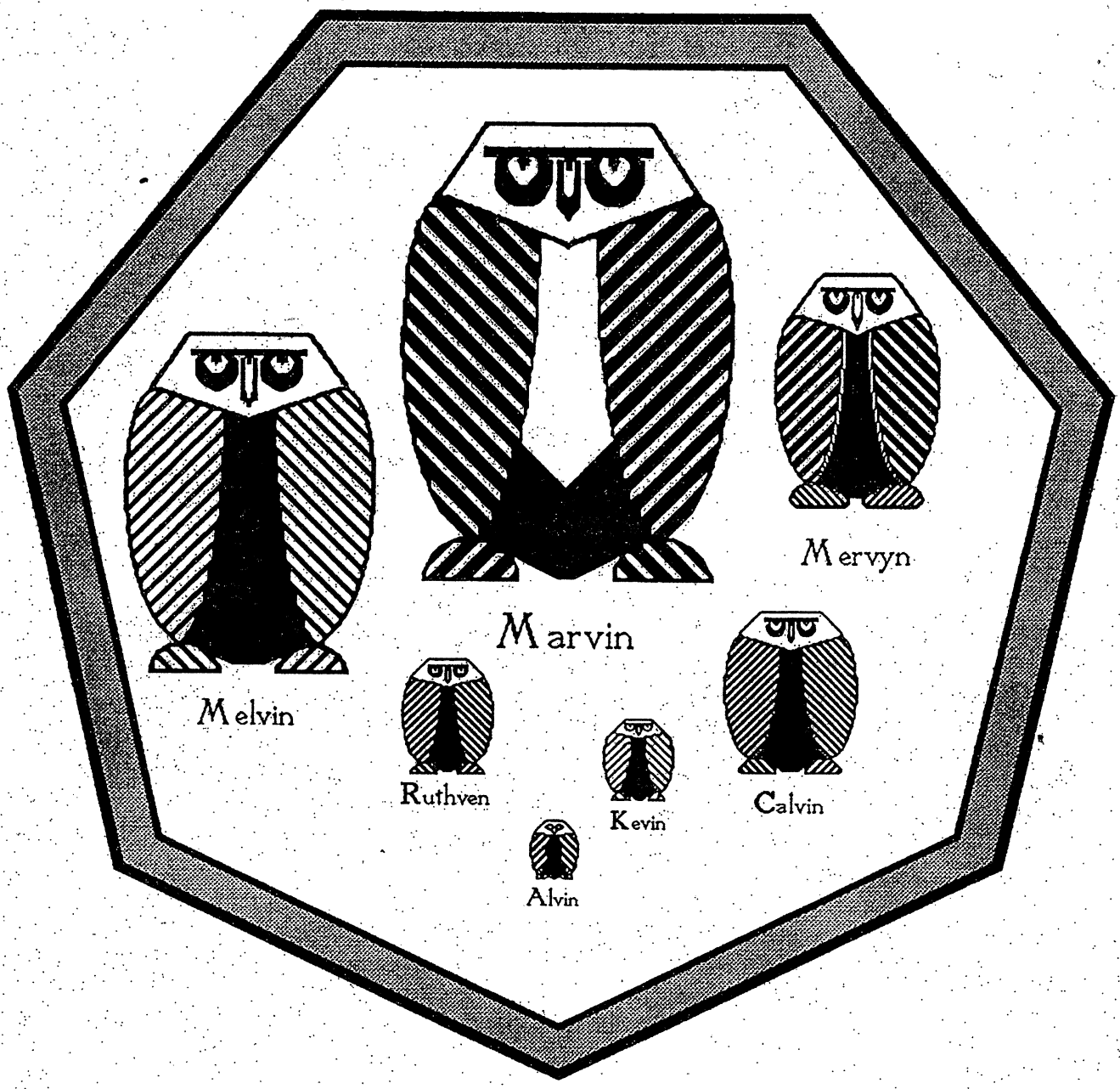
...and Seven [7] Questions, which will involve...

I heard that! "Why Seven [7] Questions about this base-5 land, when normal Terminal Praxeis show only Six [6]?" *I'm ashamed of you. Have you forgotten the Mavens?*

What Mavens? Why, these *Mavens, of course!*

---

[1] Just-discovered erratum: in *Tentative Chronology*, for some inexplicable reason, under year 597 [*æt.* 42], there has been found the astounding note: "ȣsp employed as lobby-sweeper in Capitol at Clus." *Clus?!* As every Thefarien child knows, and the text to which this entry refers makes quite clear, the Capitol is at *Enphurli*. I am sure that you caught the fluff automatically; I merely put it on record here for the sake of the unlearned who will come after. [*Addition 1993:* The correction has, of course, been made. But let this stand to show the dangers of insuring veracity in research.]



Do these august glowerers strike no responsive chord? None at all? What is one to do in these degenerate days?

I really...oh, all right, just this once. I'll get down on all fours and *explain.* But you'll hate yourselves, I promise. What could you be thinking of? Nothing much, doubtless.

The Coven of the Seven Mavens, those very strange birds, is the Ruling Power in Clus. It regulates the City and all that there proceeds. How? Why? Their accession to power is lost in the mist, probably back in the Third Round. Are they eternal/immortal? Do they replace themselves at stated intervals? Theories abound, but the matter is still *sub judice,* and there it will remain.

Anyway, the Long Questions on the Terminal Praxis, from which yawl are to make yawl's momentous choices, will be keyed to the powers and provinces of the Seven. As follows, reading from large to small:

Marvin: *The MaxiMaven, or Ravin' Maven: Grand Administrator, Keeper of the Keys. Especial Area: Pleasures of the Flesh.*

Melvin: *The MajorMaven: Inspector/Assayer/Destroyer of Public Buildings—and all buildings, in Clus, are Public. Especial Area: Architecture.*

Mervin: *The MirrorMaven: Grand Sultan of Seem. Especial Area: Representation in all its forms, including—oh, yes—the Drama.*

Calvin: *The ManicMaven: Observer-General of Aberrations. Especial Area: Dreams and Intelligence-Gathering, which is to say, Spying.*

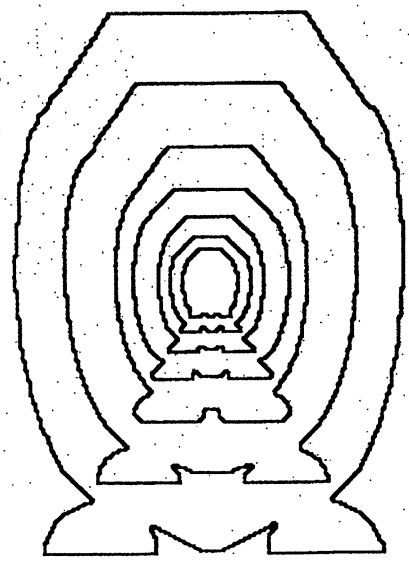
Ruthven [pronounced *ROO-ven*]: *The MinistriMaven: Preserver of the Rights and the Rites. Especial Area: Religious Ritual. And the Archives.*

Kevin: *The MinorMaven: The Overseer of Small Business—and all business, in Clus, except for government, is Small. Special Area: Service Professions.*

Alvin: *The MiniMaven: Commissar of fortuitous accidents and minor blessings. Special Area: Correct Change...in all that that phrase means.*

I trust that the mere recitation of the Seven and their *provinces*, as one might say, will jog your memories, ready you for the assault on Clus. For which see especially High Thefarie 33. And other places.

A graphic before I go. Recall the ancient tale that declares the Mavens to be nothing but toys, eminently nestable, small within large. Untrue, but maybe not groundless. Seven into Five won't go...where did they come from? Remember the Forbidden Graffito, suppressed since time out of mind:



Identification Lists
from the Terminal Praxis, 1991

Another year, another search for impedimenta, for those almost subliminal items that yet lurk at the edges of your consciousness, ready to be poured upon the page. The search, let me say, becomes increasingly centrifugal. Mainstream was left in the dust a year ago, at least, and we now fare to the Wilder Shores of Trivia. As you may see from below:

A.1: HOLIDAYS

δsp noted early in his time in High Thefarie that the place seemed positively *beset* with festivities, large and small. Not only were the five days of the regular pent spattered with madly recurrent occasions for ΡΕΧΙΩΜΩΝΘΝΛ, or regulated release, but the year was a clogged minefield of Memorials, Celebrations, Carnivals, Rituals, Feasts, Festivals, and what have you. As often as δsp pondered on this—generally whilst standing in line, waiting to "participate" in some manifestation or other of Carnival, or Devotion, or whatever—he came to the same conclusion: The Cyclic structure of Thefarien existence, culminating as it did at Cyclend in a disastrous attrition of national memory, obsessed the collective Thefarien psyche, which, fearing *everything* might be forgotten, set aside Holidays for each item/person/event it wanted to remember...and even some which, on the whole, it would have preferred to forget. Well, possibly. In anycase, the forest of festivals burgeoned to the point where it was only after a half-century of standing in line, and dancing, and exchanging gifts, and planting things, and ingesting nutritional disasters perpetrated only once a year, that δsp could feel his way around the boobytrapped calendar with knowledgeable resignation, if not confidence. You, in fact, O Best Beloved, know the High Points of the Thefarien year better than he ever did...which you will now demonstrate in grappling with the following Holidays.

Select 3 (THREE). Identify them each as to time (what season?), reason (what do they commemorate, or promise, or...you get the idea), place (if applicable; this for local Holidays), and then—the heart of your treatment—furnish a blessedly brief description of the principal events that transpired, distinguishing this fest from all others.
(Only two of the following, by the way, are associated primarily with Clus. But you know that.)

1. The General Bountification
2. Shrivé'en
3. ImageTide
4. Shikanereí
5. Slosh[1]
6. Tawdry Twoday
7. Cutlereve
8. LeapDay
9. Dependence Day
10. SchnofTime
11. The Annual Deflation
12. Curseday

A.2: PRECIOUSSSSS

"WHAT HAS IT GOT IN ITS POCKETSES?"

I quote from another troglodyte, in another world. One who was trying to win a game, and thereby preserve whatever he/it held most dear. Even as yawl, Carissimae/i, even as yawl. Except, of course:

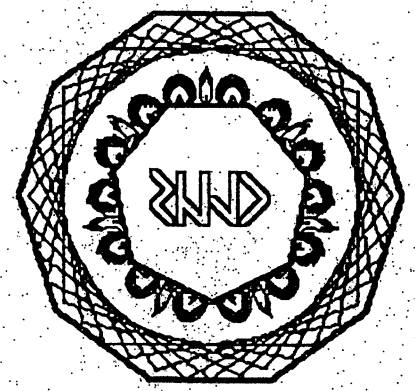
[1] You may treat any of the five principal Sloshes, or even one of the myriad lesser Sloshliks.

This is not a fictional riddle-game, but RW *Life*, where the Rule of AC/DC[2] holds, and your future may well depend upon what you hereinafter indite.

Yawl are no Gollums. I know that. But I know, too, that Yawl know what **dsp** had in *his* "pockets" on that fateful day in XV/586 when his career in espionage hit rock bottom, as recorded in **hT** 33. As usual, all orifices, crevasses, niches, and nooks in his costume—the somewhat voluminous Cluvian streetwalkers caftan, the one with the interesting cutouts—were crammed with *stuff*. [There exists no better word for the odd amalgamation of strange items secreted about his person.] Yes, *Stuff:* Some of it may have been, in fact *was* of prime importance to his halting occupation as spy; but an equal proportion of the mess was connected with Something Else. Anything Else. Or Nothing In Particular. Packrattery, or Terminal Accumulation, remained a disease which he could not shake, no matter how hard he tried. As hard as yawl shall try, oh **Carissimi/ae,** to tell me about it in the course of the next half hour.

Below are pictured 12 (TWELVE) of the items that cluttered **dsp**'s "pockets" on that frustrating day in Winter1, XV/586, as he shuddered on the cold corners of the Downtown Sharping (sic) Section of Clus. Of these, 6 (SIX) relate intimately to his work (sic) in espionage; 3 (THREE) to other projects that he had in mind, or even (very vaguely) in hand, and 3 (THREE) can only be said to be disgustingly personal.
Choose 3 (THREE) for your knowing treatment. Of these, 1 (ONE) must be spy-related, 1 (ONE) must be connected to some other line of work, and 1 (ONE) must be quite personal. Identify and describe each BRIEFLY: What was it? How big was it? Of what material(s)? How was it, well, used? What was its ultimate effect (on **dsp**, on something or someone else, whatever)? What became of it?

DO REMEMBER: "Pockets" is really no term for the niches; hence the quotes. In a Cluvian Caftan, there is room for any item that can be stashed under the seat of a RW 747; not more than one of the larger items, of course, and even that one may make the wearer/shlepper hideously uncomfortable...but "pocketsize" would run considerably larger than in yawl's world. Pictures of these items do not specify size, not even relative size, which is hence "negotiable." As is material.



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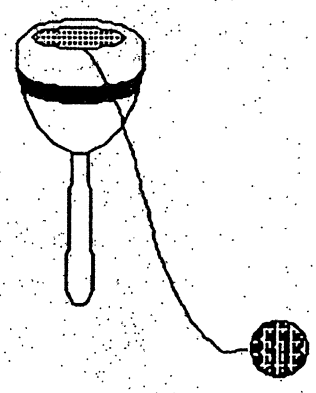

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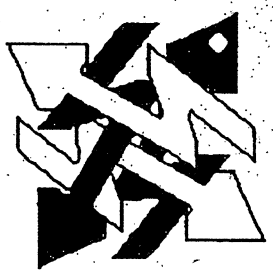

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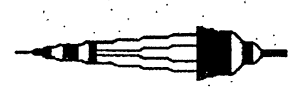

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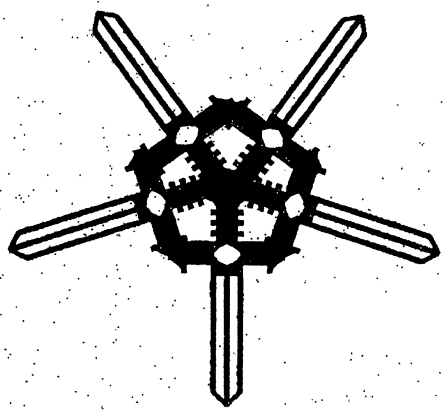
[2] "Answers have Consequences—Direct Consequences."



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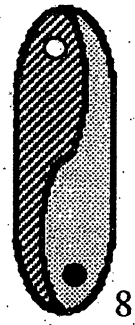

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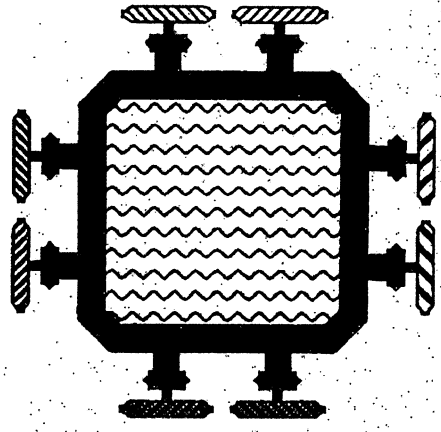

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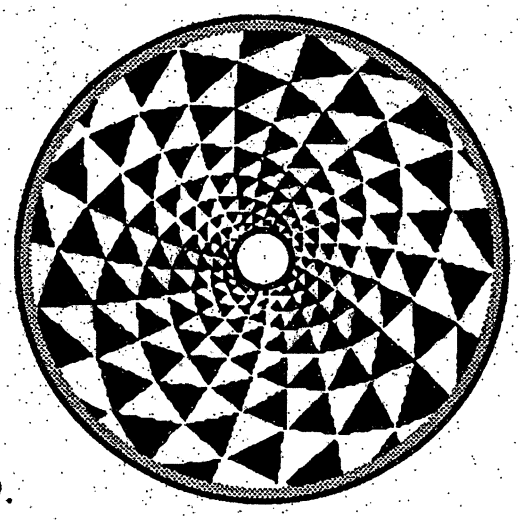

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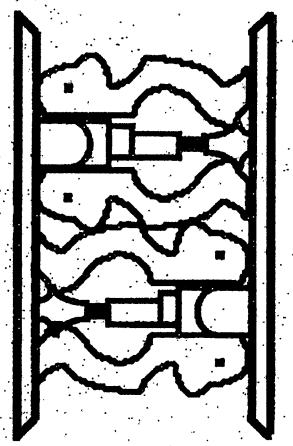

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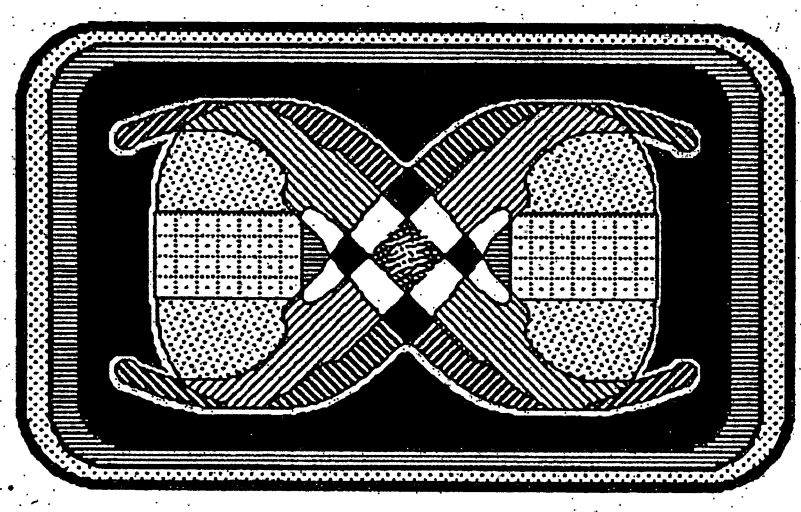


11.

12.

LONG QUESTIONS
from the Terminal Praxis, 1991

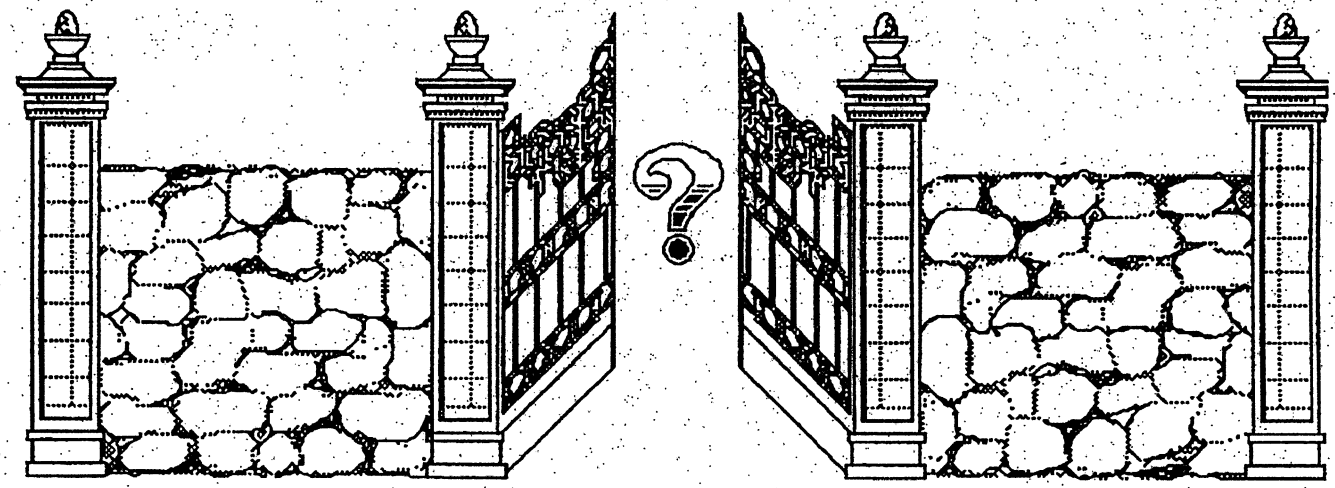
Ye Clubian Sojourn

Oh. Do be careful to enter through the

PLEASURE PORT

now open for your

A/BeMusement



Quite a place, Clus. Perched proudly atop uneasy cliffs that shoot skyward, wholly inexplicably, from the quag and mire of the Nixiheim Fens, it lures the feckless Thefarien, on pleasure bent. That's what it's there for: Pleasure. Pleasure its stock, Pleasure its mode, Pleasure its means.

And Profit its goal. The Mavens see to that.

Bear this in mind as you wrestle with your Long Questioun of choice. You will be given the Seven Stops that ȣsp made during that hell of a day in Winter1, XV/586, already mentioned in A.1 above, "when his career in espionage hit rock bottom, as recorded in ȟT 33." Each Stop, hard though it may be to believe it, coincided with the administrative area of a different Maven, and these odd birds occurred in order of size.

Choose 1 (ONE). Consider the structure there referred to, the documentary evidence there mentioned, and present the place, and its relation to Clus and ȣsp, in detail for the delectation of the unlearned. (This may—I shudder to say it—involve a narrative...though it need not, and I'd be as happy if it didn't. Not that you'll be docked for storytelling should you tell one. Of course not. Would I do that to you?)

You realize what this means, don't you? For the first time in some years, the answers in this section of the Terminal Praxis will be longer than the questions.

I. *Morning, First Hour:* **dsp** stops, with a heavy heart, at the No Free Lunch Jollities. Lays wreath on stairs, has cup of **slugs**, goes upstairs to talk with the denizens, who have their tights in a twist over a new directive on the Performance of Fleshly Pleasure promulgated by Marvin The MaxiMaven, Keeper of the Keys. Sympathizes, borrows feather boa, moves downtown.

II. *PreNoon, Second Hour:* **dsp** checks his stride to take a look at the Maze of Passion, now undergoing extensive repair and renewal. Reads the Statement of Intentions and Building Permit promulgated by Melvin The MajorMaven, Inspector/Assayer/ Destroyer of Public Buildings. Reflects, rather mindlessly, that it certainly needs more complication. Sighs, moves on.

III. *PreNoon, Second Hour, Half:* **dsp** peers in to The Green Gaiety, the theater dark this pent of pents. Notes, with a chill at his heart, the Official SDN [ShutDown Notice] signed by Mervyn The MirrorMaven, Grand Sultan of Seem. Notes disgusting condition of SuckSlot, and thinks, not for the first time, that Thefarien drama is too damned traditional, and all because of the setup of the playing area. Not the time, he figures, to try GreaseTrap.

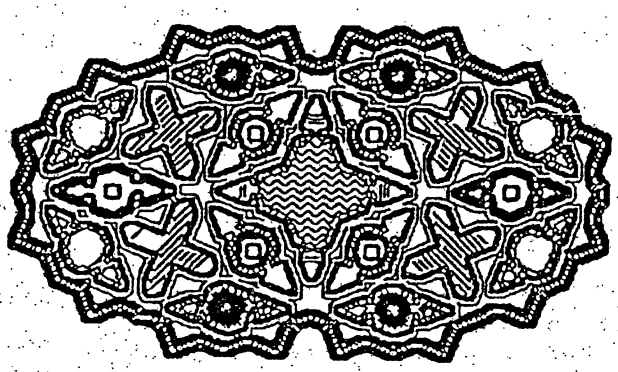
IV. *PreNoon, Third Hour,* to *PostNoon, Third Hour:* **dsp**, in heavy drag, takes up his spying spot in new location, opposite the MavenHaven. Can accomplish nothing; the tourists are restless today. Goes into Haven lobby for midmeal, but is chased out of hallowed halls by Prenga Duft, his immediate superior, who brandishes new directive from Calvin The ManicMaven, Observer-General of Aberrations, excluding spies of lesser grades from headquarters while on duty. Finishes shift with rumbling stomach.

V. *PostNoon, Fifth Hour:* **dsp**, deeply depressed, stops on his way to his hovel to recall happier days at the KnifeCourse. Not that he's been there, of course, what with the exclusion of males, but Eniaca used to talk about the coming-of-age ceremonies for girls. Wishes he had a daughter...then picks up handbill dropped by 12-year-old giggler and becomes less sure. Handbill, describing ritual, is signed by Ruthven The MinistriMaven: Preserver of the Rights and the Rites. Sick at stomach, revises his wishes, heads for office.

VI. *Dark, First Hour:* **dsp**, sad and rather ill, lets himself into cramped precincts of *Worlds in Collusion*. Yet another hasslenote from the office of Kevin The MinorMaven, Overseer of Small Business: grant may not be renewed; if it isn't, **dsp** doesn't know what he'll do. And just when he's so near to finishing model of New Clus. Reflects that, all in all, it was an injudicious move...but is shortly lost in fiddling with it.

VII. *PostDark, Fourth Hour:* **dsp**, stunned and sleepless, makes for home. Passes the startlingly non-regulation JoyHouse, the Change-Your-Luck, and thinks of entering, but no...Has to be up early tomorrow. As he trudges past the decorated door of the Change- Your-Luck, a squat underling rushes out, forces a scrap of scrip into his hand. He looks at it. Signed by Alvin The MiniMaven, Commissar of Fortuitous Accidents and Minor Blessings, it entitles the bearer, any bearer, to a free midmeal, fourth class, in the Haven lobby. **dsp**'s spirits lighten: Tomorrow will be better, by god! Whistling a baroque bourrée, he makes for his cheerless pallet at home.

EXHIBIT A: CLUVIAN STRUCTURES: size, material, and, indeed, graphic orientation are all negotiable.



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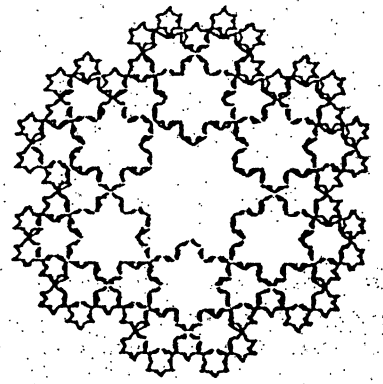

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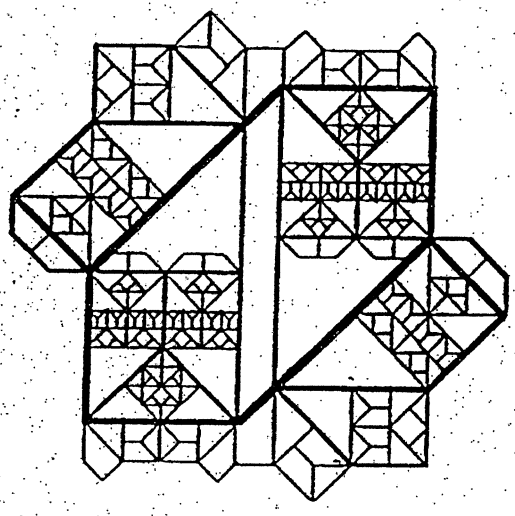

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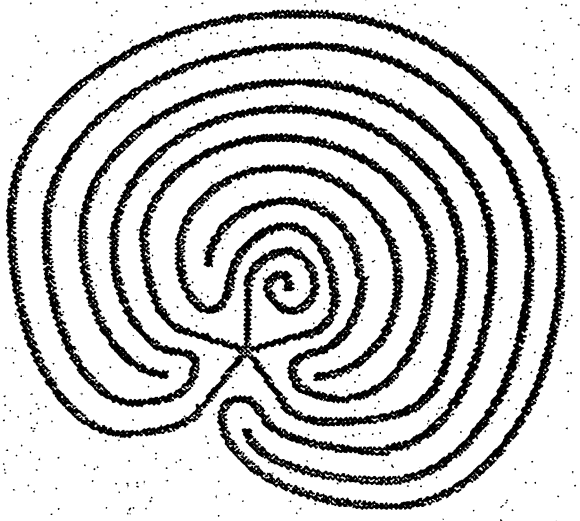

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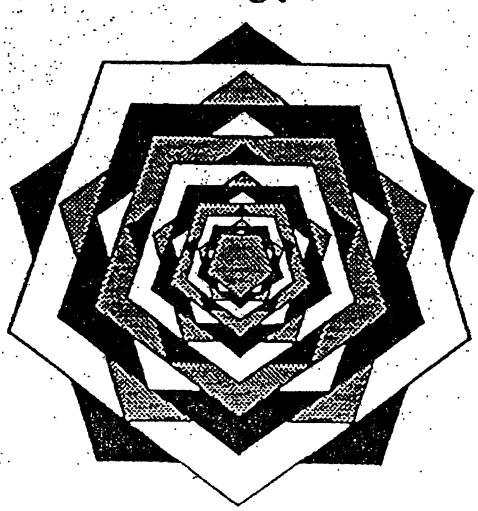

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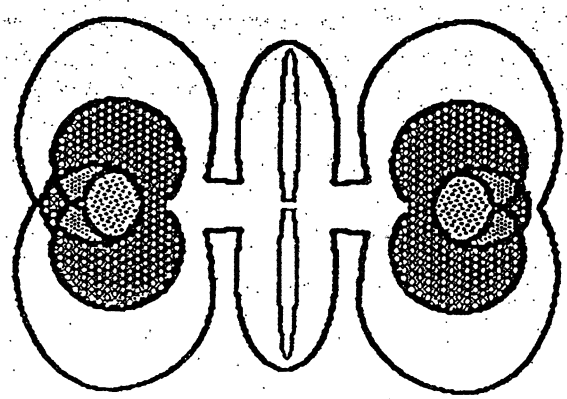

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EXHIBIT B: Detail Map: CLUS and environs.

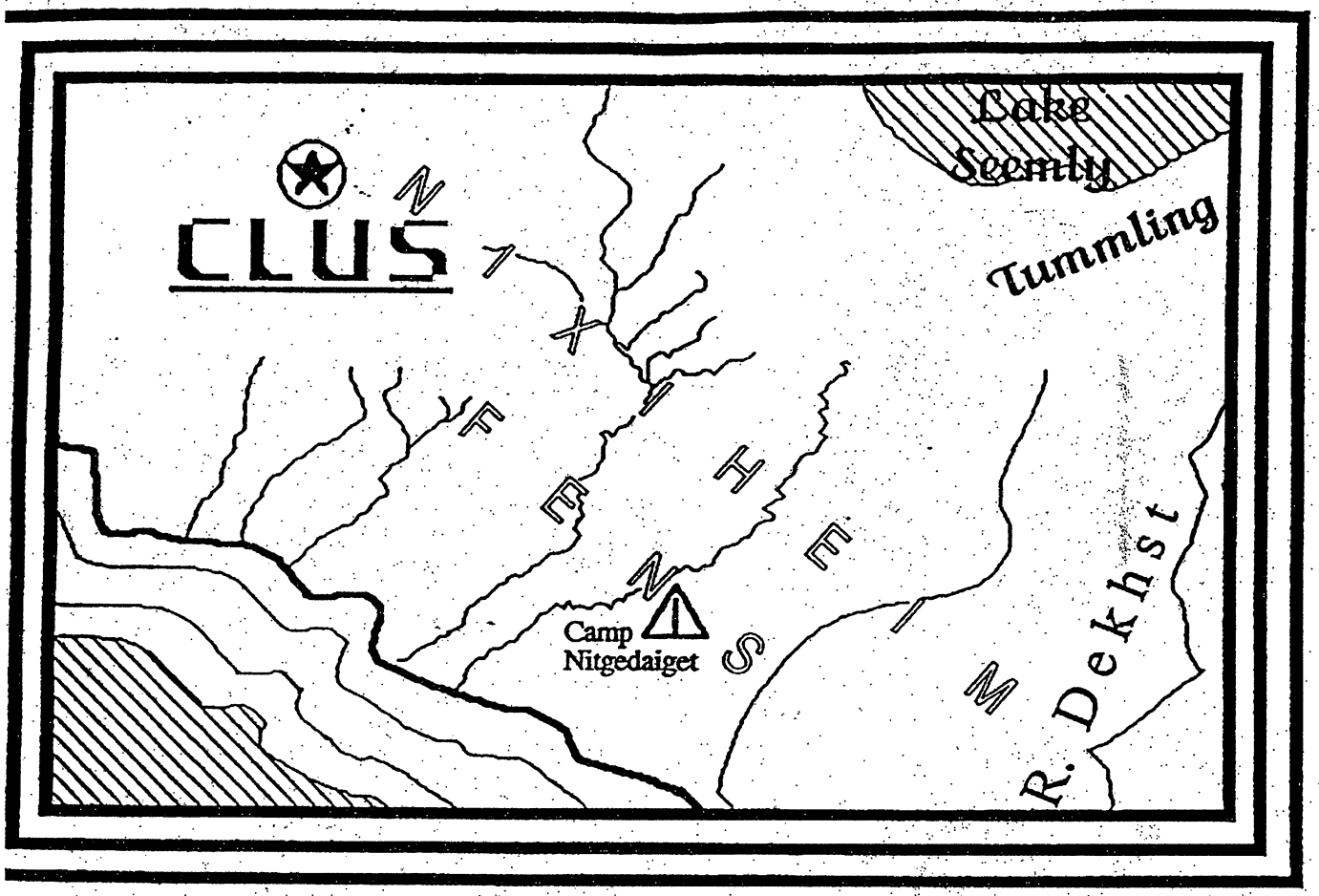
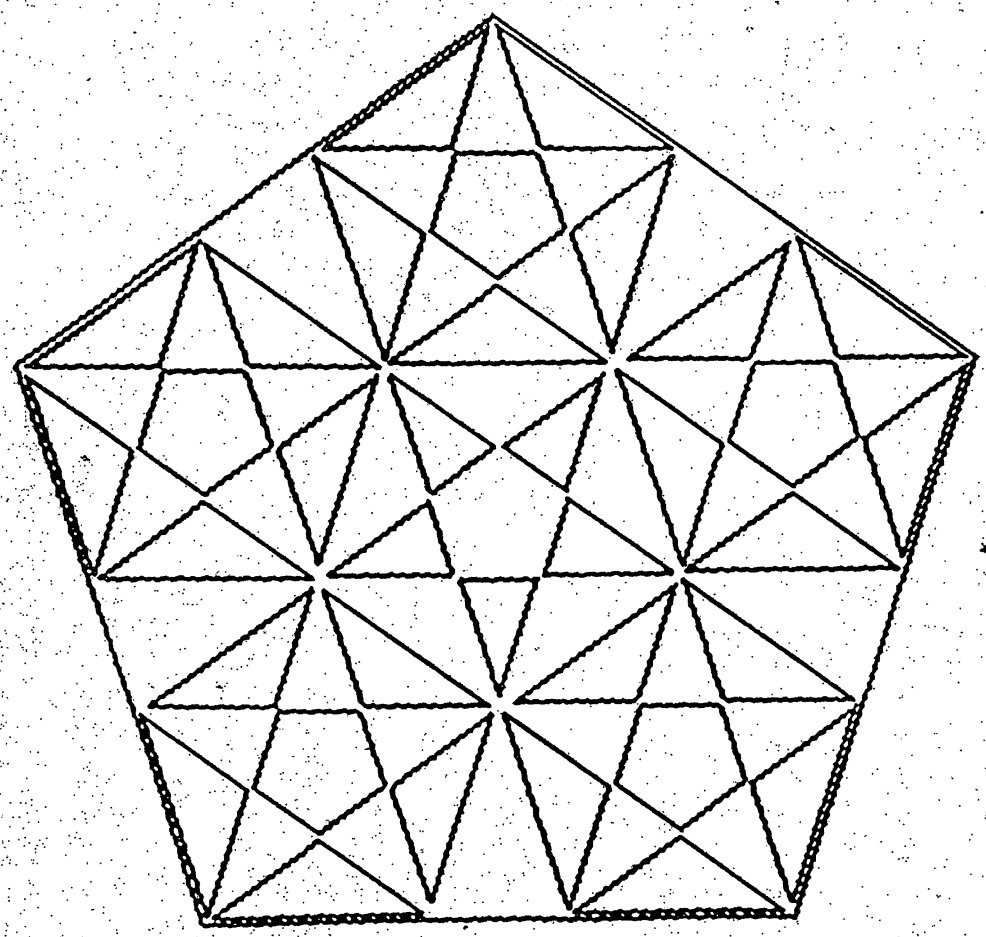


EXHIBIT C: CLUS in Diagram.



Forenote
to
Version 7.112358

And here, at least and at last, is the version for 1993. It could stand more editing, but it's just become real again, and, as usual, there's not time. To revise or cut

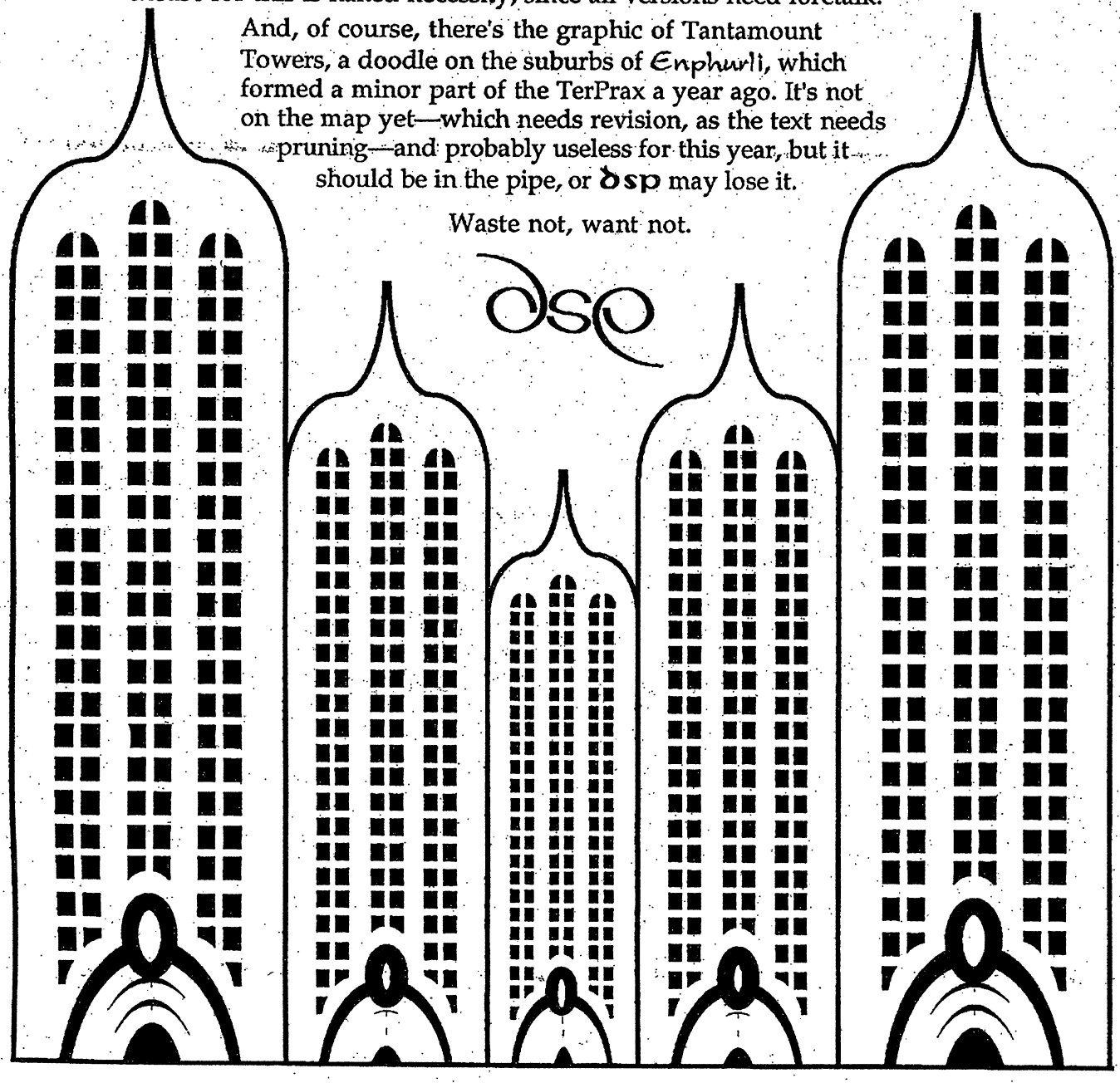
Θefarien Materials

is the work of a long, slow summer...when ðsp's always doing something else. There's a lesson there, if he could but figure it out. . . Anyway, the only excuse for this is naked necessity, since all versions need foretalk.

And, of course, there's the graphic of Tantamount Towers, a doodle on the suburbs of Enphurli, which formed a minor part of the TerPrax a year ago. It's not on the map yet—which needs revision, as the text needs pruning—and probably useless for this year, but it should be in the pipe, or ðsp may lose it.

Waste not, want not.

ðsp



from the

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT
on the Terminal Praxis, 1992

In other years, Your P&G has expressed a ritualized, if ingenuous, astonishment at the lateness of the date, *e.g.*: "Can It Be December already?" This year, however, he is only too conscious of precisely when It, Yawl, and He *are*. The term is down, and so's the perfesser. He's going to have to husband his rhetoric for the load of SM[1] that will conclude this screed and the next, and really can hardly, at his age, be expected to juggle all those heavy clots of verbiage merely to activate the groundlings...who will, in any case, do The Demanded, and would really much rather be spending their Now in other pursuits. Don't open that thesaurus, bartender; I'm on the wagon. For me no more the cup that cheers or the *mot* that mellows; a simple declarative sentence with seltzer, that'll suffice. . . .

Etc. . . .[2]

NOTICE!!!

Ever solicitous of your welfare, Your Preceptor & Guide herewith pronounces officially, in class, the Eff-Cee, or Fatal Commitment. The Long Questions, at least, in this year's Terminal Praxis will concern a mazed[3] building, a notorious and all-but-unlocatable pile, hitherto in this our RW to be found only in an ID list and, both misrepresented and mislocated, on the map promulgated in 1990. It is, course,

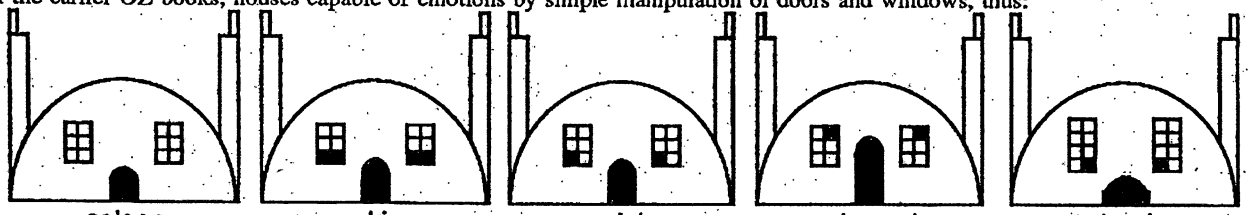
Questhost Castle!!!

---

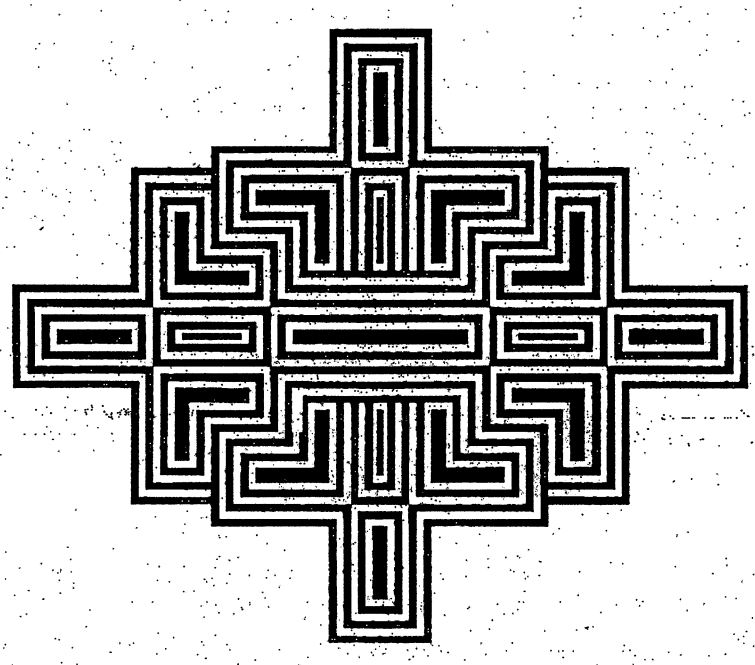
[1] *No*, VA; it's not dirty; it stands for Substantive Material. Shame on you.

[2] Actually, it didn't suffice at all. Your P&G hared off into a mad round of inspirational verbiage that was *too much*, even for him, and in this location at this remove, merely gets in the way. It has thus been shifted to the RA, or Rhetorical Appendix. See it there if you dare.

[3] *Sic*. This is not a typo for "an amazed building"—a phrase that rather reminds me of Jno. R. Neill's domed houses in some of the earlier OZ books, houses capable of emotions by simple manipulation of doors and windows, thus:



Herewith, for your re-edification, a plan of sorts of QUESTLOST CASTLE —or not so much a plan as a *view*. The *overall* view from above, to be precise, which would have been confirmed as a bird's-eye-view had it been possible to secure a bird that was a competent draftsman. In any case, it is well to remember that there are five [at least] storeys to QLC, and on *none* do *all* of the divisions indicated by this group of lines occur.



The complications attendant upon any consideration of this perverse place are such that a systematic list may be the only way to put them down comprehensibly, following the six-part journalistic formula **Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?** with a brief explanation of the problem[s] posed by each:

1] Who? By this, I take it that "Who ran the place?" is meant. No one knows... or, rather, too many people know, and know for certain, but no two know the same answer.

To give a few of the possible candidates: No One; Minimus, God of Small Favors (not in the official Thefarien pantheon, but never mind); Eniaca Omniversant (this gets it inside the family, causing rather more problems than it solves); the versatile nymph Cortia Genannt, erstwhile dryad of the Forest of Broslyn (see HT 42.2, p. 95); Cnacebor Zidi, Master of Mistresses; ꟼꟼꟼ; a large quasi-Berkshire hog or sow (the two swine proponents differ madly on this point); a disguised button-molder; the smallest Maven of Clus...and these are only the most obvious proposals.

Let me narrow the field slightly by pointing out, for good and all, that QLC was *NOT* run by No One. This is not to say that the BIC (Being In Charge) was one of the above. It may have been someone completely else.

2] What? The sources agree that QLC was, in fact, a castle...but there is violent discord on what it looked like.

The representation on the *BASIC MAP* is wrong, wrong, wrong. A canned castle-sketch to which cartographers recur at these times; it has hardly any points of resemblance to, or with, QLC. We have no idea whether is was nearer in conception to Carcassone or the Seagram Building, to lacy-spired NeuSchwanstein or commodious Cow Palace.

We do, of course, have the *PLOT* immediately above. It is, for all practical purposes, accurate—though possessed of no scale, no indication of material. We also have five additional plans of the various storeys—ground to four—which, when they at Praxis-time, may somehow help. Your P&G is not really sure. Puzzling, puzzling.

☞ Oh. Accurate as the *PLOT* above is, it contains one teeny irregularity, which must be a deliberate error.

3] **Where?** QLC's existence is undoubted...but its location is utterly unknown, if not unknowable.

Appeal to the *BASIC MAP* will, I fear, do no good. True, a ¿QuestLost Castle? does appear there in the "Unmapped Steppes" of the *BASIC MAP*s upper right quadrant, triangulated by Wyverns and Snollygosters. But note the query marks: these are the nameless cartographer's admission of Utter Funk. He had not the most infinitesimal clue as to where the building might be, save for the Traditional Wisdom that it was *not to be found within the confines of High Thefarie proper*...but Traditional Wisdom is frequently off the mark. Then why, you may ask, can't we go by the accounts of those held in quite pleasant durance there? Because they never remembered how they got there...and their departure points are spread all over the *BASIC MAP*. You'd think that people...but I digress.

4] **When?** Initially, this sounds stupid. What is meant here? *When* is a building, indeed! But think of Old Main, central to and beloved of generations of UT students, now utterly gone for more than 60 years. Old Main has a *when*, and it's not now. Even so QLC, about whose time scholars confess almost absolute befuddlement. Just at the point when, in the course of history, one is ready to declare that it has Passed Beyond, it crops up again.

BUT: The Old Main syndrome is *NOT* what faces us with QLC. It seems rather a case of Temporal Intermittency, of a Castle which appears at regular or random intervals, rather like the faery towns of Brigadoon and Germelshausen in Northern European folklore: something which is Always *there*, but only Sometimes *here*. Which would be all right, if only the cycle could be agreed upon. If, of course, there *is* any cycle.

5] **Why?** A Castle—QLC was certainly that [see **What?** above], but there is rampant contradiction and confusion on the question of *what it was for*...or, indeed, if it had any function at all. Other than, of course, *to make questors give up questing*. Yes, Virginia, it was [*¡gasp!*] a *Detention Castle!* But that only scratches the surface; it's too general, too vague. Specifically, what was it for? What did it make its victims *do*?

To one quite influential scholar, it was a repository of puzzles, games, and especially *Mazes*, the better to distract the enticed wanderer from his appointed task; there were so many items to solve before leaving, according to this theory, that almost infinite delay was possible.

Another source—there are always scholars of this stamp—holds that it was S-X, of course, that trapped the unwary errant, that the charms of at least one person of the opposite S-X were so overpowering as to blot out all questions of outside necessity.

A third authority favors Administration, of all things, as the attraction: the captive was offered power beyond an errant's wildest dreams.

Other, quite minor, theorists plump for: Food; Entertainment; Learning; Freedom (this seems a paradox, but the article was quite determined on the subject); Worship; Isolation; and Participation. *They cannot all be right*...which is not to deny that all of these attractions did exist at QLC, especially the mazes. One is mystified. (You, of course, are not...but One is. One always is.)

6] How? How can we know *anything* about this place? If **ƀsp** has been our sole source, and he's forgotten [mind-clouding is standard issue in Detention Castles], how can we possibly figure out The Truth?

By triangulation, *bubeleh*, triangulation. He did, after all, bring back the plans, though they've been Under Something for the last 13 1/2 years. And we can gain further fixes on that Truth from slips he's made in the mass of documents he brought back, both published (which you know) and unpublished (which you know also; of course).

There is, for example, the curious two-year blank occupying 38th and 39th years, XV/593-4, in the Chronology. And, if you look more closely, you find that the only events that he has listed for the four previous years are hardly earthshaking bits of news: *His two children went to camp?* Suspicious, no? Something to hide, huh? And where better to hide or be hidden, to hide *and* be hidden, than *QuestLost Castle*?

There is also the little matter of the slight irregularity in the Plot, the Deliberate Error, referred to under **What?** above. Verry important, that one. Just what was he hiding?

7] Howzat? [The seventh question of six. It figures.] In spite of the similarity of names, QLC has nothing to do with *LastQuest* **Piglet**...though the latter has been mistakenly referred to, I grant you, as *LostQuest* **Piglet.** Pure coincidence. Nothing to it. Don't give it another thought. I—he—whoever—shouldn't have brought it up. Pay no attention. Shove it behind the curtain.

Something might be gained from bringing up Your P&G's fatal fascination with repeated consonant clusters, as but it would really serve no useful purpose.

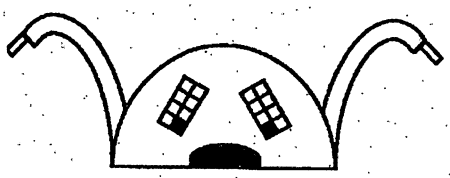
8] Huh? [The *eighth* question of six. Oh, dear.] What is the Clue? You know the Official Clue? The IPS, or Initial Puzzle to Solve, which opens up the Final Solution? There's always one in these cases. Where is it? Does anyone agree on it? Anyone at all? Hello?

Hello, yourself. As it happens, you're in luck. Yes, VA, there *is* a Clue, and all authorities agree that it *is*, if properly understood, the Key to all this. Of course, they none of them agree on what it means, but that's *your* worry, isn't it?

Here we go:

Goosey, Goosey Gander,
Whither do you Wander?
Upstairs, and Downstairs,
And in My Lady's Chamber.

That should do it, I think. . . .

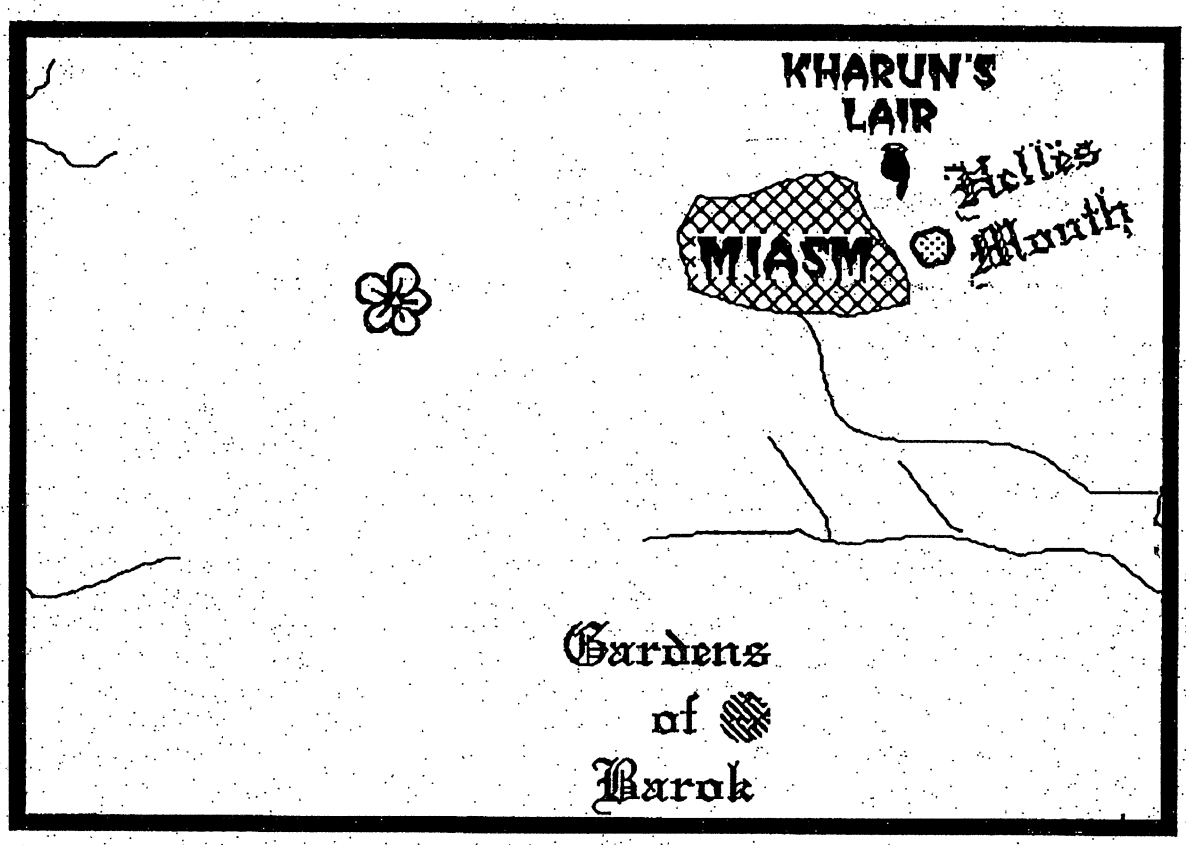


ausgespielt

Identification Lists
from the Terminal Praxis, 1992

A.1: ROUND ABOUT ENPHURLI

Take away the huge name of the capital city from the socio-economo-parageographical center of the MAP of High Thefarie and what do you have? Gaze and despair:



Dismal prospect, no? A rosette in absolute isolation. This is a thriving nation? As usual, Dsp has been remiss. There are at least a dozen lively, prosperous cities of note that ring Enphurli, but to judge from his presentation, this is possessed of nothing but blank for 125s of ZILACs around. It might as well be the land of *Nada*, vapid destination of bed-bound tots. Few things are worse for an Imaginary World than being relegated to the category of DreamLands. Why, in the case of OZ alone... But I digress. Oh, let us say, the Shame of it! Poor, poor Enphurli!

You, however, O Best Beloved, can rectify this lamentable situation, or at least make a beginning at its resuscitation, this very day. Thanks to your efforts, Enphurli shall be again the jewel among jewels, the diamond set among rubies. Below are listed the names of a DOZEN [12] of the go-getting communities that gird Enphurli, all well known to all Thefariens, and indeed to you. Ponder the above excerpt from the MAP, recalling their locations and history. Because, Oh Best Beloved, they are not RW suburbs, or "bourgeois utopias," to quote an acid commentator. These are Thefarien suburbs, independent cities of stature, all but one of them long-established, and every last one Important, somehow, for any adequate treatment of High Thefarie.

Choose 3 (THREE) for your knowing treatment. Of these, 1 (One) must be the city of recent foundation, dating from Dsp's tenure in that fabled land. Describe each fully, noting the circumstances of its founding and the reason(s) for its importance.
Then, LOCATE your triad of suburbs on the large map (that constituted the last page of the 1992 Terminal Praxis). Indicate how its location relates to its importance as you have described it, if such a thing is possible. (And it should be, it really should. Nearness to the Capital is certainly part of any city's real importance.)

1. PassionDale
2. Cacciatortorici
3. RoverAches
4. Noshery Town
5. Porous
6. Burnside3
7. Tantamount Towers
8. Kitschin
9. Lower Leftwich
10. SchnofBurgh
11. Brstlaç
12. Kanji-Where-She-Dropped

REMEMBER: There is, in this DOZEN (12), no unimportant spot, and their physical locations and appearances are, of course, Quite Significant...

A.2: SONGS

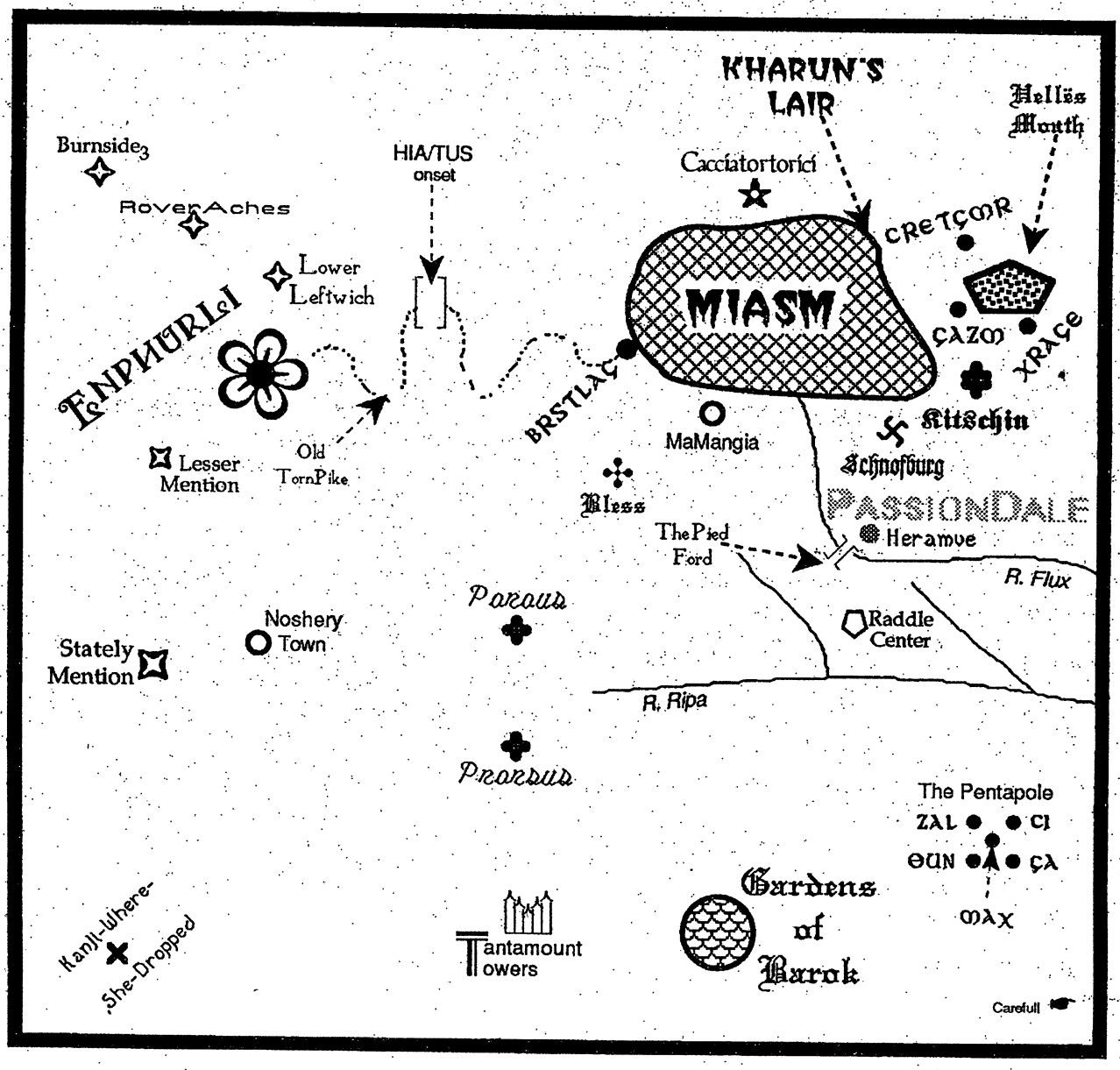
It would be, of course, ridiculous to suppose that High Thefarie, that hardly current otherwhere, possessed anything like the hypertrophied "music industry" that so enlivens and enervates our RW days. Communications were in what we would reckon as a primitive state; no nearly instantaneous transfer of information from one place to another existed. Further, there existed no method, in that benighted age, of preserving/repeating sound or sight; recording or taping would have appeared to the Thefariens like magic...except for the minor reservation that they *had* magic, and, whatever it did, it didn't keep sounds around. So: No Hits were Paraded, no Forties Topped, but songs made it from one place to another *on foot*, as it were, carried by traveling groups from place to place. Oh, there was music *publishing* of a sort...but Thefarien notation was so absolutely hideous to read that songwriting was no way to make a living, as Dsp found out to his considerable cost. Only by traveling with one's own group, he reckoned, could one indulge one's muse with any hope of remuneration, which led to the ill-starred tour of XV/607, culminating in the Utterly Misbegotten Concert [HT 34]. Thefarien musical memory was excellent; Thefarien musical copyright was non-existent, and these two facts led, not to plagiarism [High Thefarie didn't know the word], but to circulation. A wildly popular song, fumbled through the lungs and instruments of a number of groups, might be carried the length and breadth of High Thefarie in no more than 2 1/2 years, producing no money and, indeed, no fame. The composer's name was normally the first thing sanded off by the process.

Still, Dsp kept trying, in all forms, and in his salad days—roughly, XV/600 until the disaster at Tlusc already referred to—turned out no fewer than 125 songs, at least a dozen of which received the Thefarien equivalent of wild acclaim. Mangled they all were, of course, and anonymous they all quickly became, but he would derive a mild satisfaction in later years when, arriving in some hamlet back of beyond, he would hear a cadence that still resembled what he had written, or a verbal hook that had resisted attrition.

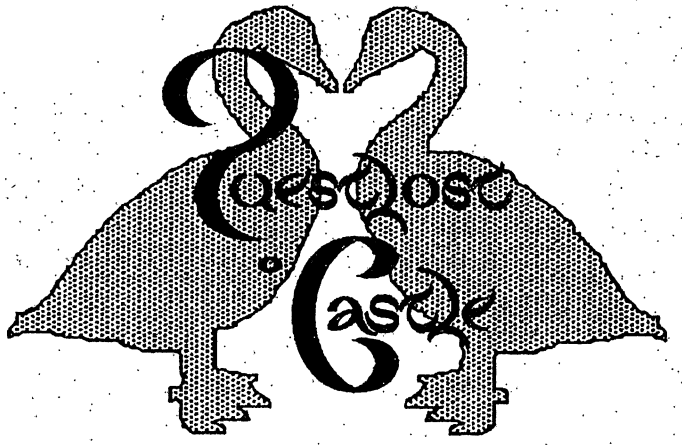
Below are listed 12 (TWELVE) of Dsp's greatest "hits" from his glory years. Select 3 (THREE)—1 (ONE) from each of the principal genres: PsychoPop, ClassiFolk, and Advanced Bash. In addition to specifying that genre, summarize the verbal content of each, and identify it as to place, time, and (if time permits) situation of composition.
It should be noted, of course, that the titles are not the ones originally given, but the names under which the songs permeated the musical storehouse of Thefarien standards. This may or may not affect your treatment, but you should note that numbers 6 and 7 were originally the same song, and its title was *TubThumpers*. A word to the wise...

1. DreamDrome
2. Crowed Noises
3. Fungus Fable
4. Here's Talkin'
5. Happy Hocks to Yawl
6. Towel for Two
7. Let Me Lave You Tonight
8. The Cry of a Coy Lorgnette
9. The Boys from ¡Basta! Road
10. How Is That Spilled?
11. But Twice a Year
12. Annihilation, Darling!

[*Addition 1993:* Below you will find an enlarged map of Enphurli and environs, with the outskirts located at last. More momentous, however, is the first appearance, on any RW map of High Thefarie, of A Road! An actual ROAD! Not a very *good* Road, of course—the infrequently-traveled and hideously-maintained route from the Capital to BRSTLAÇ, the jumping-off place (literally) for the MIASM, where no one wanted to go anyway, but that's hardly the point. After this tentative essay, who knows what throroughfares and throughways may not flaunt their sinuosities on the charts! NB the first tentative indication of the workings of HIA/TUS! What a day for cartography!]



LONG QUESTIONS
from the Terminal Praxis, 1992



Goosey, Goosey Gander,
Whither do you Wander?
Upstairs, and Downstairs,
And in My Lady's Chamber.[1]

Cryptic in the extreme. Who is to know what ƀsp meant that dark and dank WoeDay of XV/594 when, returned to the bosom of his Near and Dear, he set down that traditional quatrain in the middle a large coffee-stain on what purports to be the Overall Plan of QuestLost Castle, circling it with a flourish and signalizing it with a large NB?[2] Doodling, you will say. Just emerged from a year and more of racking, enforced pleasure, cracking under the strain and regressing to his RW infancy; only this and nothing more.

And yet. How can we be sure? That he had been to QuestLost Castle is undoubted; in fact, it is the one *really* sure item in the whole bewildering catalogue of half-truths.[3] Half-truths behind which he might have hid the whole business, had he not worked so hard at it.

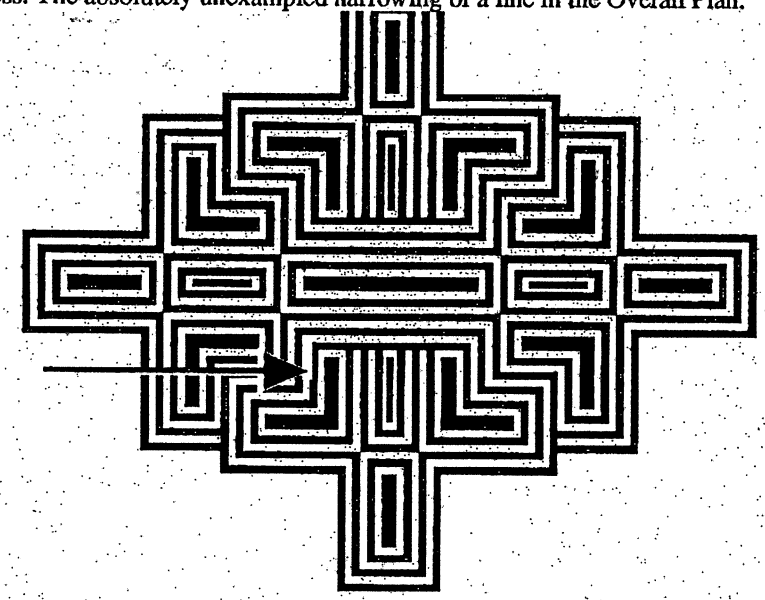
Really, he was hardly an architect, was ƀsp. Nothing shameful in that; *lots* of people aren't architects. But he kept trying to cover it up...and *there* is where his ineptitude, or rather inarchitectitude, crashed through into the light of day. I mean, consider: To keep his sagging reputation from the utter depths, there was one fact above all that he had to hide, and that was *the truth about what happened at QuestLost Castle*. He'd made it hard for himself by being so in love with his own ingenuity, of course. The fact that he'd brought back the only information, the only drawings, of that benighted place was too much for his strokeloving ego; he simply had to go public with them. Which might have been all right, if his

[1] I think it is safe to say that the excessive capitalization here is non-significant for the purposes of the Mystery. Or perhaps not.

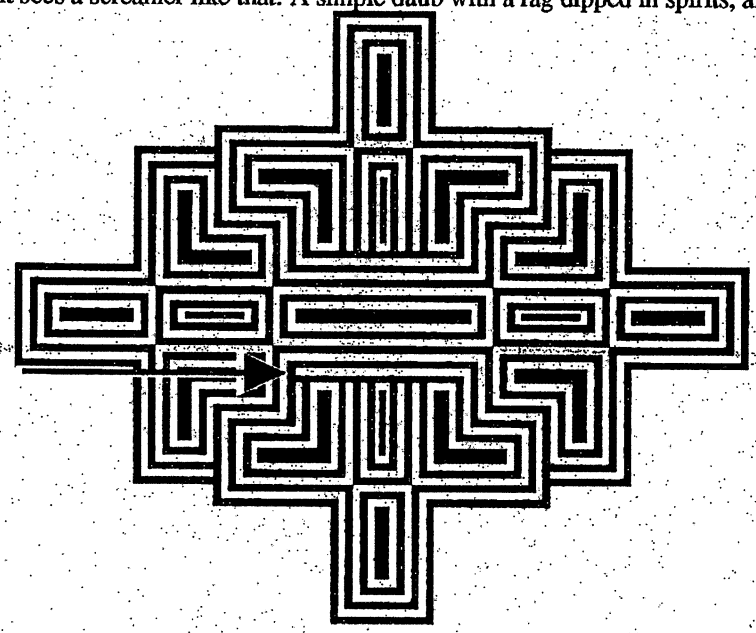
[2] There is a scholarly question of some possible moment here: Did NB, regardless of its enshrinement in Thefarien script, stand for the standard RW Nota Bene [= "Pay Close Attention; This Is Important"]—or was it the stock abbreviation for the rather less standard Thefarien injunction NAZ BRSTLAÇAL? Since the latter translates as "(Throw) No Daffodils (Here)," it would seem much less probable, but with ƀsp one is never quite sure.

[3] This needs to be qualified. It is also undoubted that QLC was/is a "Detention Castle," a standard locale of what scholars know as the "Kalypso Syndrome." This procedure is, of course, the more or less forced restraint of a Quester from his/her Quest. By "more or less forced is meant, quite simply, that said Quester did not intend, at least initially, to desert the Quest; the turning-aside was initiated by the Kalypso-figure [M or F or whatever], who used Applied Pleasure much more often than, say, bars and manacles.

concealment of *The Irregularity* hadn't been so impossibly hamhanded. You noticed at the last class meeting, doubtless. The absolutely unexampled narrowing of a line in the Overall Plan:



He'd tried to white it out, or rather over, and simply messed up. But modern pinacological research knows what to do when it sees a screamer like that: A simple daub with a rag dipped in spirits, and, LO!



The secret passage to the deadly doorway was exposed, or, possibly, the deadly passage to the secret doorway, if not the doorway passage to the deadly secret...anyway, it was exposed. It was all on the "third floor," of course, as you can see on p. 167 below. But why do I tell you all this? You know it, you know it better than I. And so...

Give your solution to ONE (1) of the following Questions. Be full, and illustrative, and...well, I would say "inventive," but you might get the wrong idea. You have, of course, *discovered* the truth.[4] Do not fear to bolster the answer to your Questioun by borrowing items from *another* Questioun.

[4] In this connection, it might be well to recall that the English verb "invent" comes from a Latin verb meaning "find." [I mean, it couldn't hurt.]

Let it be said now that the Nursery Rhyme, Goosey-Goosey etc., should be applied in reference to all answers, if only in passing.

Oh. Given that ƀsp was no architect, you may correct his plans and drawings. (The "third floor," for example, doesn't seem to have a *floor* at all.) Inasmuch as he was making a case for himself, you may correct anything you deduce that he said or wrote. But go easy on this: Liar and cheat and self-server he may have been, but he was not so lost to idiocy as to be implausible. He had *some* standards, after all.

One last Oh; A maze of sorts follows. Use it if a maze, or mazes, come into your answer.

I. Where *was* QuestLost Castle to be found? [Relate it closely to the territory.]

II. Why was ƀsp emprisoned [so to speak] in QuestLost Castle for at least a year and a day? That is, what Quest had he been on, and how was he drawn aside from it?

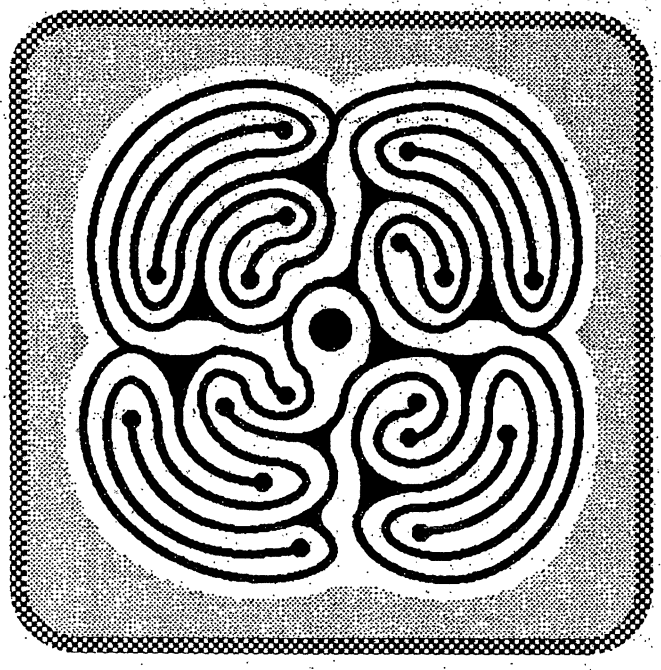
III. Where was/is My Lady's Chamber? How did it figure in the Mystery of the Castle? What central part of that edifice does it form?

IV. What was the attraction? Given that Pleasure of some sort was probably employed to keep him in QLC, what pleasure was it? And how, oh, *how* was it worked into the structure throughout the entire Castle?

V. Who ran the place? Which is, very possibly, to ask, *Who was My Lady?* Unless Malady, the butler, is meant. Or Gans Anders, the groundsman. Or Mother Oy, the cook. Or any of the multifarious personages that swarmed throughout the Castle, seeming to be servants of one sort or another.

VI. How did it affect him? Relate the trauma or bliss of QuestLost Castle to ƀsp's career, taking particular care first to formulate and then to discount the story that he told his wife after years away from home, with more of a year of that totally hidden.

Which should do it. TURCE MURILA, Yawl...Oh, just a moment...

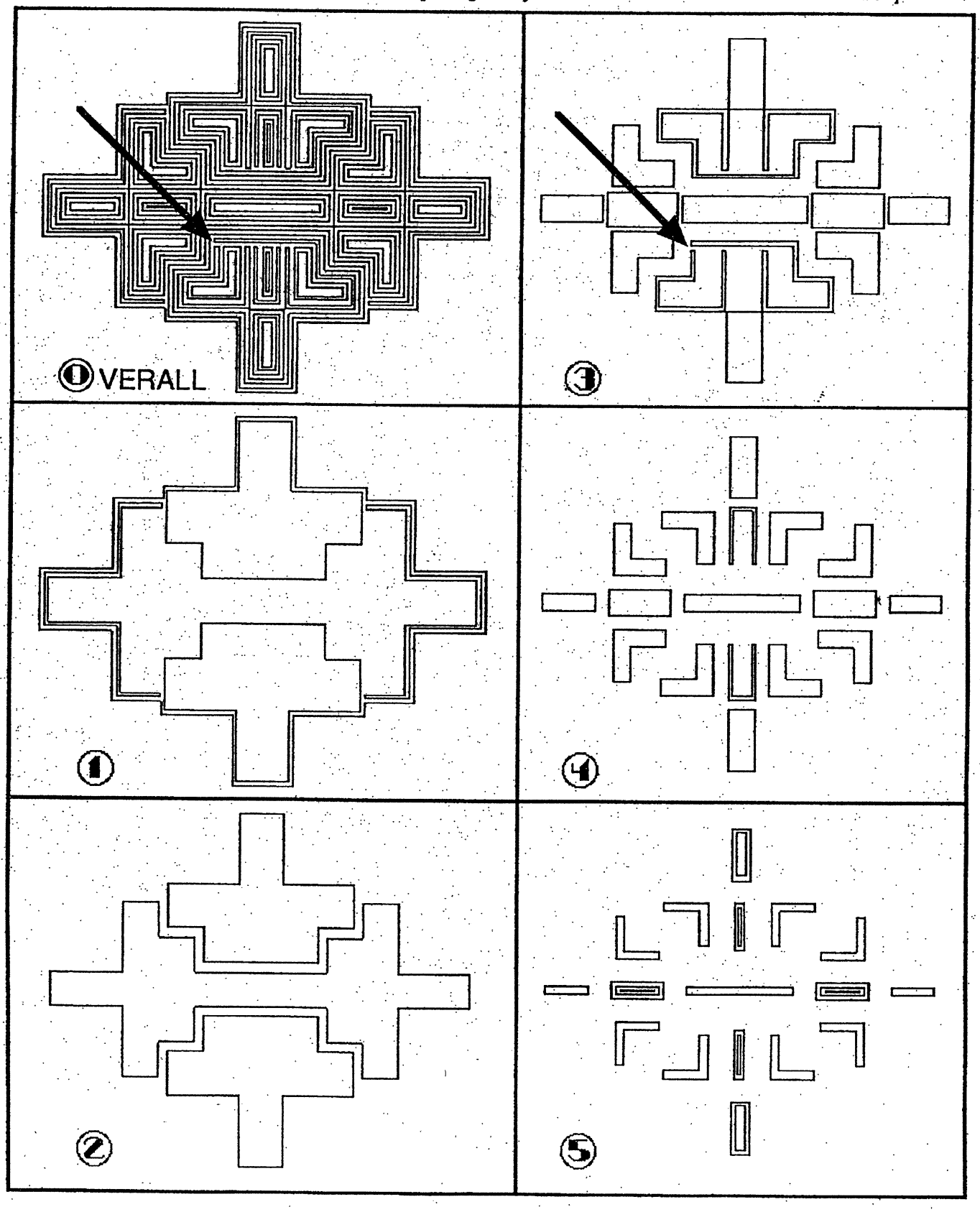


Nearly forgot the maze—the "brainmaze," some have called it. Fitting.

Westrost Castle

"floor plans" [¿cross sections?]

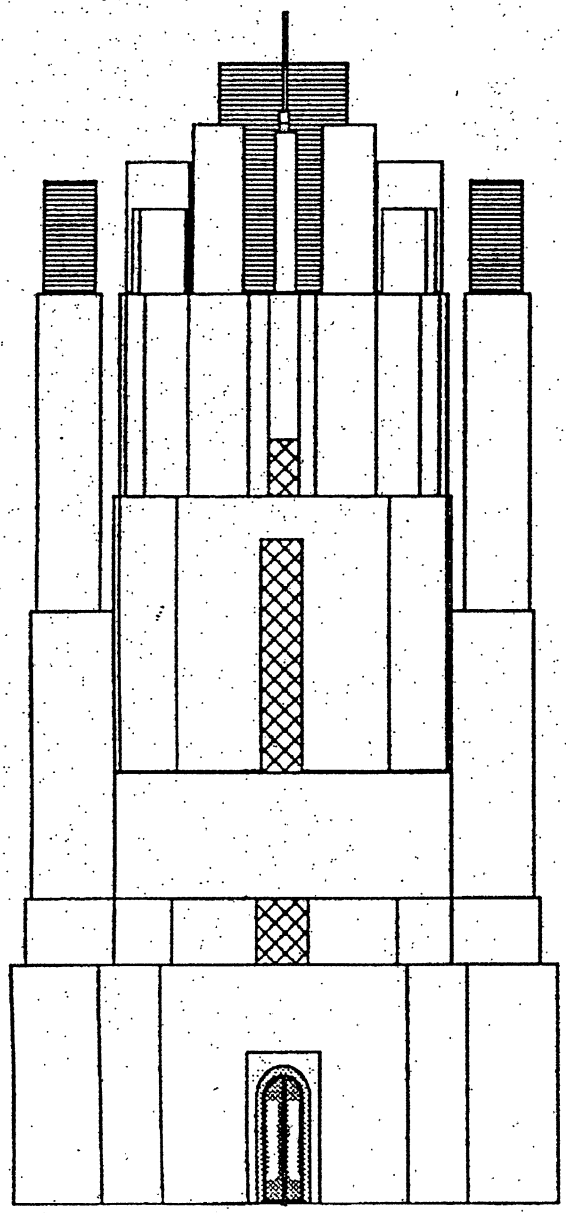
[Irregularity indicated on Overall and "Floor" #3]

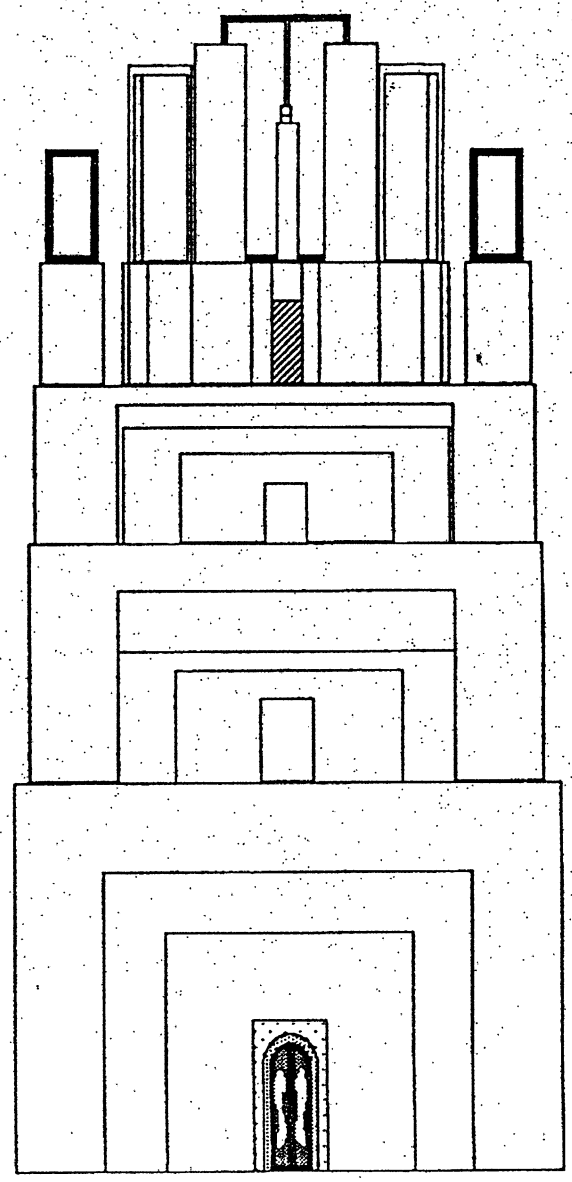


AFTERTHOUGHT

Two Conjectural Restorations of Questrost Castle

From that masterpiece of ambiguity and indecision, the Terminal Praxis of 1992...and it must be said that both resemble, well, *terminals*. Their single virtue is that they each fit the plot—the QLC diagram, not the narrative. Against this must be put the undoubted fact that no reputable castle has ever been erected in the Art Deco or BauHaus idioms. But that's a matter of façade, isn't it? If DSP had more skill, he might have taken his undoubted genius for kitsch and produced a supernally lovely place. So much the poorer are we.





Theatrical Memorabilia, XV/599 Sum_2

from the newly discovered fragment of Grease Trap

HOTFLANKS
Oho. Is nothing. For texture, yes.

SIMPLE
Oooh. Twouldn't be some of them there
Erotic Additives they joke about
at the shop, now, would they?

HOTFLANKS
Oho. Could nothing be more distant
from veracity. Completely inert, yes.
Supplying merely good company in tub.

HAPAX
Harumph. No one here but us landlords,
conducting an utter random search
for Erotic Additives. Any such here?

HOTFLANKS
Oho. Is risible, no? Pleasing
to checking premises. Nothing concealed.

HAPAX
Harumph. That's just what I'll do.
—You wear
these frilly things? Under the standard
naval uniform?

HOTFLANKS
Oho. Is helping
while away long watches in briny.

HAPAX
Harumph. I'll bet.
—Well, nothing here.
But I've got you in my gaze. You'd better
watch it, sister.
—And you, too, bud.

HOTFLANKS
Oho. Ohoo. Now getting to it.
—Before you plunging, allowing me
to observing, is being more lubricious,
am meaning nutritious, if undress first.

SIMPLE
Oooh. Undress? You think I should?

---

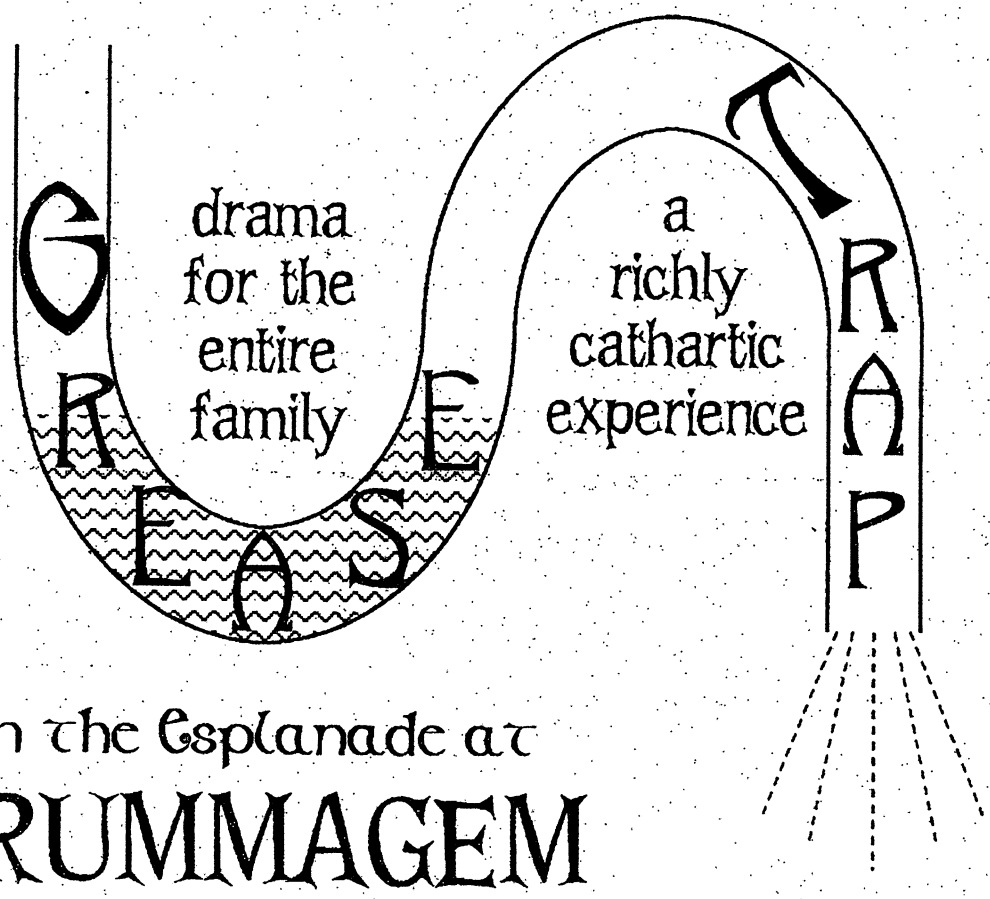
from The Brummagem Fragment

(.....)the authorities broke down the (.....) I was (. .)ting there in my sci(.....)
(.....)rely held togeth(.....)ore than string and a (.....)e bit of loose cr(.....)
(.....)ng my w(.....)skit

from a private collector who wishes to remain anonymous:

Over the Edge at maxmock

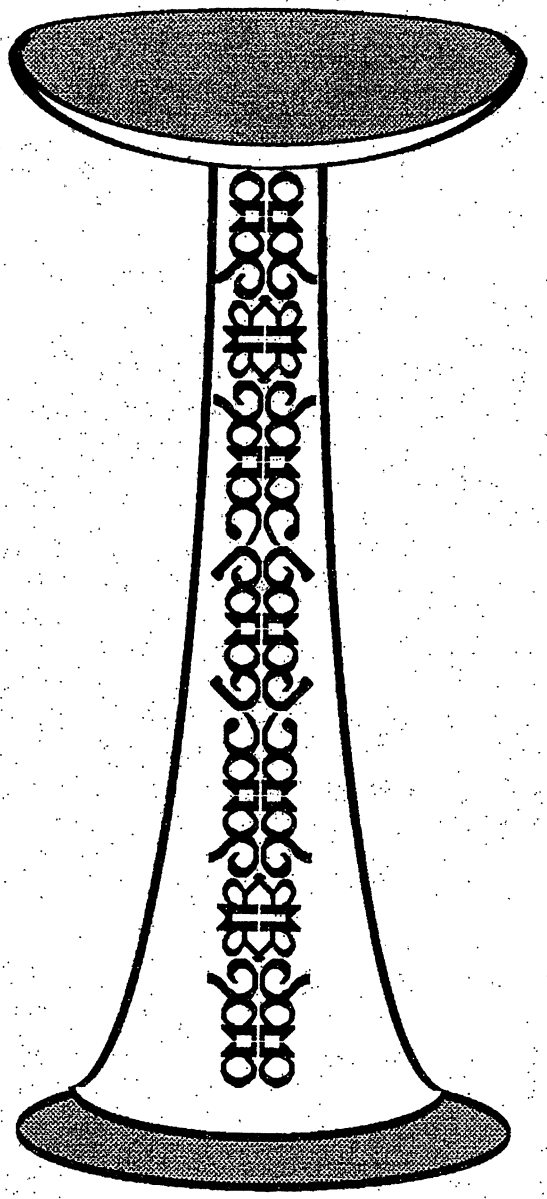
THE MAUVE WYVERN MIME TROUPE
& DOMESTIC PLUMBING CONTRACTION FIRM
PRESENTS



on the Esplanade at

BRUMMAGEM

NOONLY PENT$_5$ SUM$_2$



standard stage altar
for use in AltarCation
late XV

afternote to Version 7.112358

My goodness. Where did *that* come from?

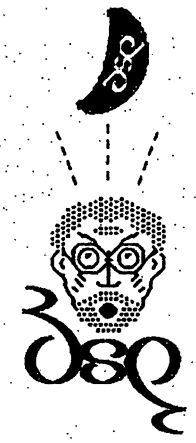
I mean, all I wanted was to get you the past stuff, and *lol*—I like that word—*lol* here came some things about *Grease Trap*, which I've been trying to figure out for at least seven years. I've always wondered how that riot went.

Well, then: This will give you a leg up—awkward expression—on the *Terminal Praxis*, and that is always useful at this rushed time of year.

So I might as well say it now: The TerPrax will be concerned with events and places on that Isle of Delight during ðsp's hideous visit there in Sum$_2$, XV/599. Which means, if you deign to follow me, that it will be intimately concerned with *the draymuh*, among other items. And the implication of this, O Carissimae/i, is that you may well start paying attention to the lecture notes on the history of that beleaguered art that ðsp formulated in 598, as shown in HT 25, pp. 37-39, plus the address book that he lost during the Mock [HT 19, p. 26], not to forget *The Dirge Against the Road* [HT 48, pp. 116-117]. [Other references and information to follow.]

Do keep in mind, by the way, that the stage diagram on p. 37 is merely a *conjectural restoration* of what the primitive High Thefarien theatrical setup *may* have looked like. It has no status in reality—even the qualified reality of High Thefarie; more importantly, it is *by no means* the stage that "Mauve Wyvern" employed in its determined effort to corrupt the hinterlands.[1] Still, it will be useful in assessing the potentialities of Thefarien theater in general and his "lubricious Wallowplay" in particular.

He is, I think, in the proper mood. Hardball time.



given at Austin
17 November 1993

[1] A more up-to-date diagram will be one of the items supplied you between now and what ðsp has come to call the *December Destruct*. The man has an impossibly bloody sense of humor. I do what I can to keep him in line, but it's very difficult—and hardly successful.

from the

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT
on the Terminal Praxis, 1993

Was I—he wondered—mistaken, or did I detect a distinctive note of terror in the crowd on Thursday last? I know that you're[1] always upset when it gets to this. The text becomes yearly more complicated and less unified, and I feel obliged to keep it back until later and later, or risk having you vitiate your own worlds for the sad reason that you may feel inclined to do as I do, not as I say.

However. Θefarien Materials is a plain text, not for your worlds. but for mine. It is a Lehrwell—a teaching world—and, as such, full of mutual contradictions, changes of direction, abandoned fascinations, and the like.[2] It is not, however, an *inhuman* place. . . and, pursuant to his basically benevolent nature, Yr P&G herewith launches into what he once called the Praeparatio ΘutaΘefarienа—the *readying*, as it were, for your issuance into that Prime Pearl of the North.[3] But, before he launches into his patented puree of vital facts and rancid rhetoric, let him take up a confrontation with reality that he's been marching towards all Fall:

Hooboy! This year we gottit a problem.

As you may have noted, there are two sections of the course this year, one that meets TuTh 1230-200 (unique # 26070) and one that meets TuTh 2—330 (unique # 26072). This has doubled the number of papers to be grappled with by Yr P&G, promoting hideous tardiness in their return, but otherwise affecting yawl in no especial particulars. But now, oh now, Carissimi/ae, the bills come due. . . inasmuch as there will have to be two, count 'em *two*, Terminal Praxeis. Numéro 26072 meets Friday, 10 Dec; Numéro 26070 meets Monday, 13 Dec. And this will cause a certain amount of havoc—more for δsp than for yawl, but not without repercussions in yawl's experience. Follow me closely, then: The essential thing about the Terminal Praxis is that it should come as *a complete and utter surprise*. Its prime point is creation under the gun, the sudden necessity of making something within a strictly limited time. Yawl will have *some* limiting of the field; that's what this handout is for. But that's all the foreknowledge, there is, or can be.

It therefore follows that there must be two different examinations. I could swear the victims of the Friday final to utter and absolute secrecy about what they've done until the following Tuesday, but that wouldn't be right, all in all. The possibilities of accidental disclosure are just too great. It further follows, O Best Beloved, that the Praeparatio must ready the two sections for completely and utterly different *parts* of the Thefarien Experience. Were they from the same area, accidental disclosure of what had happened Friday might not be a distinct advantage for a prospective Monday examinee, but it would at least let her/him know that, whatever the question about the given subject would be, it would't be the one that the Fridays had had. And the possibility, the mere possibility—well, that's just too much. I can't risk it. It wouldn't be fair. . .though I'm not quite sure whom it wouldn't be fair *to*. The Mondays, by even that much negative knowledge, might be, well, less *fresh* than the Fridays, and thus unable to avoid trying to dope out δsp's change of aspect, or. . . but this way lies madness.

Suffice it to say that there will be two totally different Praxeis, and that their long questions will treat utterly unlike areas of the Res ΘutaΘefarienae. Oi gewalt. . .This year, the Rhetoric goes, at least for the moment. We gotta get to the core, cut to the chase—and *quick*.

Herewith, then, the Fatal Commitments:

Subjects of theLong Questions for the Terminal Praxeis, 1993:

Friday Praxis: The SesquiQuinquennial Sale of 602 in the MadMall at The Curious City of MOG, at which the newly reremarried Eniaca died$_3$:

Monday Praxis: The Disastrous Performance of *GreaseTrap* on the Esplanade at Brummagem.

Information on both to follow. . . .

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[1] The second person plural here indicates, of course, the members of the class *over time* since, say, 1973. Quite a bunch.

[2] It is conceivable that I might get it into order some time, but, for that to happen, it would have to stay around for a while, rather than wink into existence in late October and out in early January.

[3] Unless it's the Rhinestone of the South. . . or, more likely, the Zircon of the NNW by N. Sooner or later, I'll figure that compass out.

The MOG File, 1

PRELIMINARY ITEMS

For the ***FRIDAYS:***

SALE RO!

Long Questions for the Friday **Praxis**:

The SesquiQuinquEnnial Sale of 602 in the MadMall at The Curious City of MOG, at which the newly reremarried Eniaca died$_3$:

To be a bit more specific:

> The SALE took place, of course, on WoeDay XV/602.
> All things considered, Eniaca did very well, and was remembered with pride.
> Her husband smiled through his tears.

You are hereinafter provided with a number of diagrams, plus an annotated copy of the excerpt from Answers to Hard Questions that was, till now, our prime source of information about the SALE.

Armed with these aids, the booklet, the MAP, and, above all, your staggering knowledge, you should be able to answer, at length, any of the six Long Questions, which will deal with such elementary items about the SALE as:

Fundamentals of Merchandising, including Window Dressing.

Finance, high and low, in Thefarie, Low and High, demonstrating complete control of fluctuations in the Real Value of the ❀ [the *moidore*, of course; have you forgotten so soon?] during those confusing Last Years.

The Structure of the SALE, with particular attention to the Charge, the OverCharge, and the Exchange, where Business gets down to Business.

Myth and the Primal Lands around Lake Seemly.

Methods of Payment, or, Love and Death.

The Bottom Lien [*sic*]: Tales from the Trauma Centre.

That ought to do it.

May your ❀❀
never inflate,
never deflate,
but always *flate*. . . .

TURCE MURILA,

[ANNOTATION]

ANSWERS TO HARD QUESTIONS

Q. I am at present recuperating from my trip to the **Curious City of Mog**, where I participated in the **SesquiQuinquennial Sale**. I am, not unnaturally, curious myself as to the reasons for the existence, and even more for the persistence, of such a bloodthirsty ritual in our Enlightened Despotism. Incidentally, my chances are rated Quite Good—I have recently been moved to the Critical List—though the barb wounds in my side fester, producing an ugly discharge that resists medication. . . . But enough of that: Why is such a barbarous procedure permitted?

Consumed Consumer, Vei

A. The Sale at Mog, relatively late as Ritual Institutions go, is held to recall the Creation of Our Country, when the Primal Lands around Lake Seemly were deeded to the God Culçanç by Tarxi the Trickster for a ridiculous sum. The violence, of course, represents Culçanç's almost comical frustration on finding the true nature of his purchase; his fangs were, in fact, barbed. Good Luck in your Time of Travail; should you pull through, you will be one of a very select group.

Such figures as were left state that 3% of participating Consumers survived. Allowing for the usual padding by The Powers That Be, this works out to no more than 1.2%. The Survival Medaille was richly deserved.

Curious?, in the sense of *unusual*, seems at first an overstatement. There is really no *ordinary* city in High Thefarie. But in MOG the profit motive runs rampant; everything— and by that I mean every last thing—is to abe had for a price. This imposes basic contradictions in the structure and function of the polity that make it seem absolutely bizarre, even by Thefarien standards—which are, in questions of bizarreness, quite relaxed. But there is, of course, the SALE itself. Now, *that* is/was *strange*.

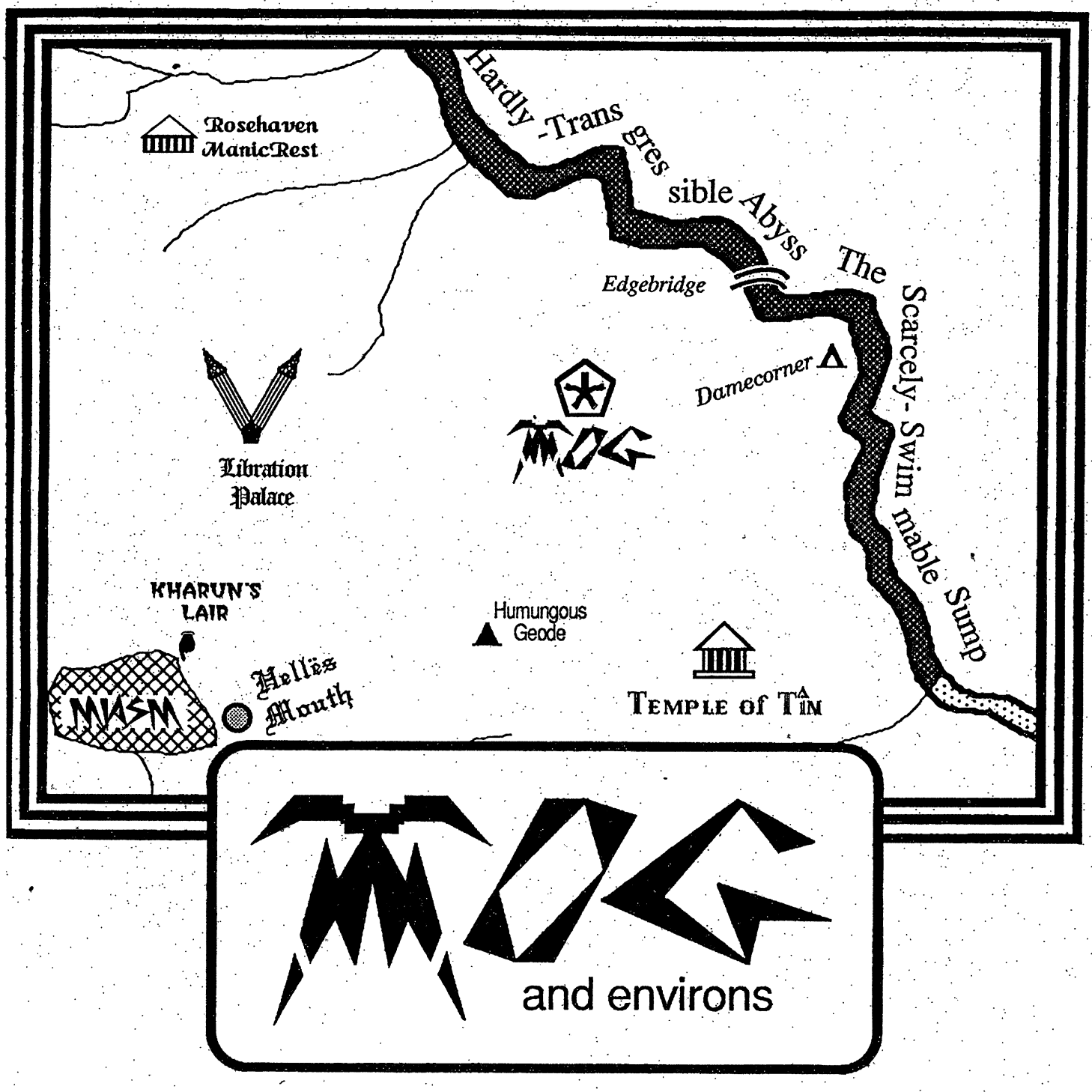
Let the record show that *bloodthirsty* is a most inappropriate term. The SALE is no mercantile Moloch, battening on the bodies of Buyers, cramming Consumers into its Maw—or rather *Mall*—merely to fuel its continuance in existence; The SALE is *neutral*. All participants are AbleBodied SALErs, in top condition, their skills honed by years of preSaling at minor SALEttes in the boondocks. If they perish—as many do—they have no one but themselves to blame. They should have waited until the succeeding SALE.

It was, admittedly, hard on both truth and symbolism to have Culçanç, God of StraightForward Violence and Bluster, bodied forth and refigured by the mercantile establishment as he was in The SALE. His fangs were not really sufficient reason for such a violation of theological propriety. And yet, one is forced to admit that the creative employment of the SALESlip, when the Consumer made her final desperate slide into the Shredder was a distinct and purely Culçançian touch, worthy of the Great Hunk himself. And the agony of the Exchange—pure (and purely disgusting) poetry! Man the Masher was never so well typed!

Which is to say, occurring every 7 1/2 years. Not really an odd interval, when you consider that it alternates WoeDay and WowDay occurrences. You, of course, are concerned with the WoeDay 602 SALE, site of Eniaca's tertiary demise. Note, however, the dates of the succeeding SALEs: WowDay, 609; WoeDay, 617; and finally WowDay, 624. . . poised just before the beginning of that last great traumatic year, *Very* significant.

Let me point out that the use of The SALE as historical memorial is not unknown in our corner of the RW, where the birthday of the Father of *Our* Country is widely celebrated by a blizzard of bargains—though its relationship to the actual Washington, save as a logo on our most common piece of specie, is most tenuous. At least the SALE at MOG aimed to commemorate the Archetypal Scam, so vital, ideologically, for the development of that devious OtherWhere.

Need I recall to you that Tarxi was/is a female, and embodies the standard functions of Woman in Thefarien society—Trickery and Providing? Woman's role as Mighty Hunter is nowhere better set forth than in the mad mix and mélange of myriads at Malls everywhere, and, as for deviousness, well, nothing can match Bargaining. After all, who put the Hag in Haggling? Who except the sly and shifty Tarxi? May her tribe increase. . . as it must do, if subsequent SALEs are to be supplied.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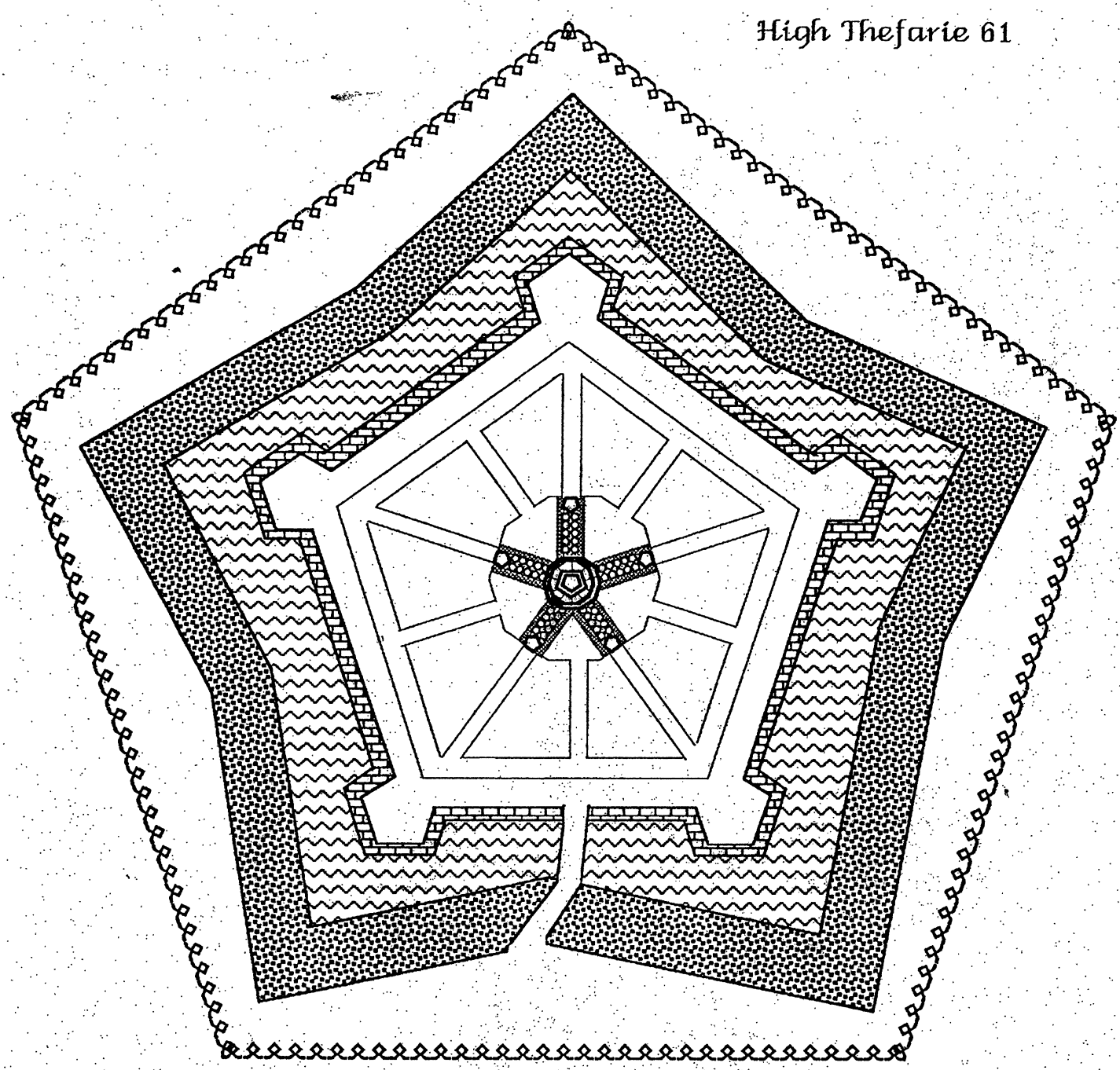
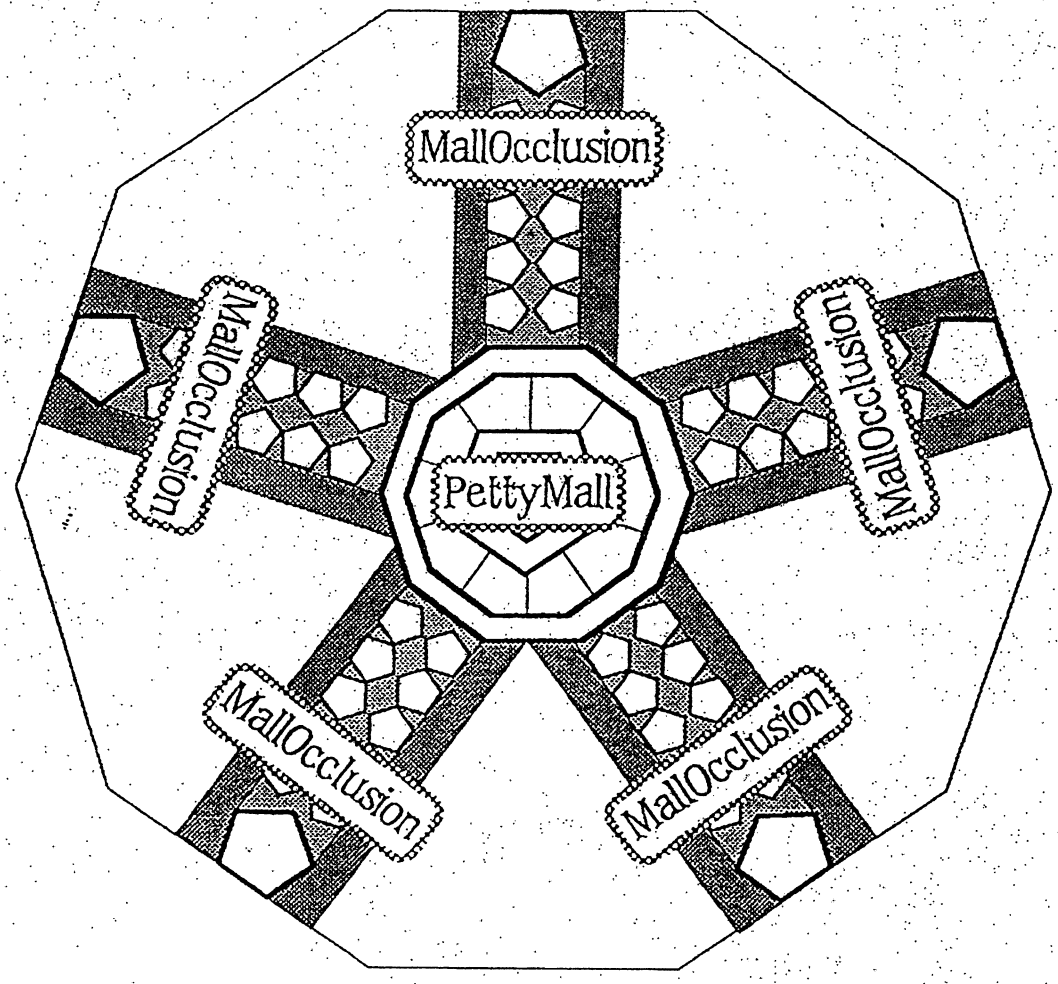


The Curious City of

GrandMall
at
Mog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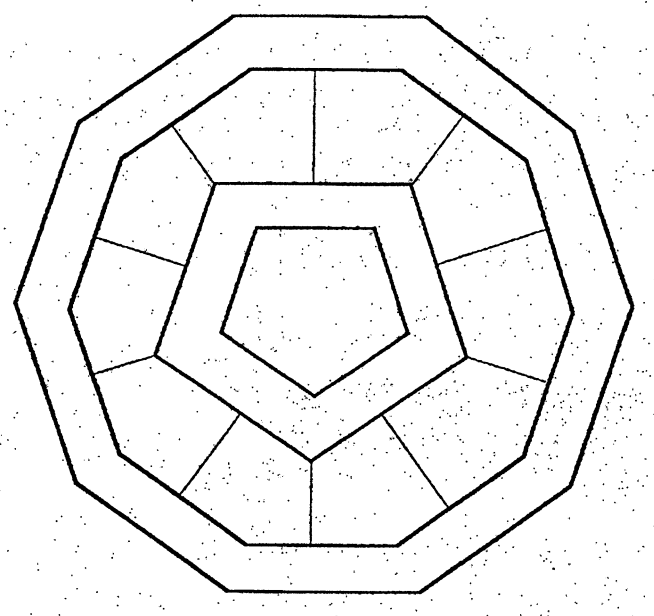
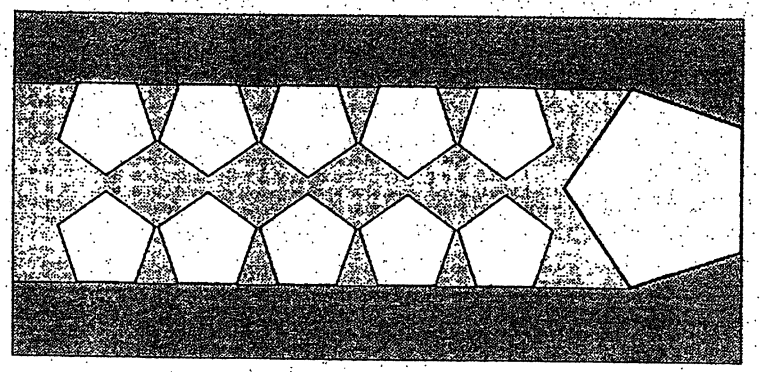


GrandMall PettyMall



GrandMall MallOcclusion

The MOG File, 2

LONG QUESTIONS

from the *Friday* Terminal Praxis, 1993

The SALE

at The Curious City of

MOG

God—one of Them, anyway—knows why she did it. . . but, then, only a God could know why Eniaca did *anything*. Certainly dsp was forever and always in the dark about her motives, and he pondered the problem for nearly half a century. Never predictable, never.

But this was wild, even for Eniaca Omniversant. Why she should hare off in her prime in 602 to spend her Third Death at the SALE at MOG—it passed Thefarien understanding, it really did. She could have been doing almost anything else, anything else in the world: novels, performances, politics, spying, heavily hostile takeovers—even athletics or more children, though those would have pushed even her envelope quite a bit. But instead, on that foul day in Winter1, 602, she entered for the SALE, just before the deadline. And, in due course, she died. A mystery. A puzzle. An enigma, even. . .

It wasn't as though they needed the money. Or not much. Well, maybe more than a little. dsp's thesis had been rejected both at the City of the Magus *and* at MOG, and his freelance necromancy business—if that's the word—was going nowhere at blinding speed. And there were, of course, the debts from Brummagem. But there were so many *safe* things she could have done rather than SALEing, and brought in more in a pentpent than dsp could make in a year without strain or sweat. Instead, waiting in MOG while he failed in Magus City, she entered as a SALEtte.

Oh, the rewards were remarkable. For the Winner. And the stipend of a mere Survivor was something. But consider the odds. There were 5^5 entrants that year, 3125 women, all fit, all unbelievably aggressive, all determined. . . and all but about three dozen *doomed*. Further, she hadn't done her homework, or prepared. She simply hadn't been *Shopping* since the kids went to camp. And Shopping is a skill like any other: You don't practice, You get rusty. Even Eniaca Omniversant. Doing it on nerve and dimly remembered expertise. ZILACAL behind the others. An Able Business Competitor? Not Eniaca. Not that year.

And yet, she nearly made it. She lasted till the Last Charge—the OverCharge, they call it. She was even ahead, going away, but let her attention wander, so the reports go, at the Final Exchange. . . and that's when they cut her down. "A remarkable performance," read the NEGOTIABLE INSTRUMENT. And the Board attended the obsequies. All heart., those gals.

But why? Why did she do it? We'll never know. . .

Unless you, O Best Beloved, cooperate, and share your knowledge, pour it into the communal cauldron. Your grasp of MOG and the SALE, of the history and process, of what was done on that wailsome WoeDay in 602, may help.

Choose ONE (1) of the following SIX (6) areas of your expertise, expatiate on it to your heart's content, and make your contribution to the solution of this abstrusion.

Thanking you in advance. . .

I. Learned opinion, of course, is agreed that the deception of Culçanç by Tarχi over the acquisition of the Primal Lands is a myth, and nothing more. Or not much more. The Thefariens of ƀsp's tenure as Cyclist were absolutely unable to recall *anything* with sureness that occured before Cycle XV began, which makes an upper limit of 625 years on their memories. How could they know for certain, or even for uncertain, an event that took place before Cycles, and Rounds, *and* Megillahs began, more than 9300 years before? Impossible! Not even the conjectural restoration, prepared by High Thefarie's finest scholars, can show a reason for Culçanç's purchase of the wasteland. There was nothing there. Pure myth—the fabrication of eons.And yet. The location, at the end of XV, of ƀsp's strange little dwelling—Marzipan House—*right over* the long-disappeared Fatal Fault—that should give us pause. Further, he lied about what he was doing—and even when he was there. Him? The always veracious, if most times inept, ƀsp? Suspicious... *unless* the malign influence of Tarχi, Trickster [or, if you prefer, Trick*stress*] of the Gods, was persisting after 9300+ years. Perhaps the story is true after all.

> Reconstruct the Myth/Legend/History of the Deceptive Bargain, or Archetypal Scam. Re-diagram the Primal Lands as they were BC—Before Cycles. Explain, if you wish, TΛRCχI by ƀsp, or ƀsp by TΛRχI. Include quotes from other seriously relevant sections of The Apocalypse of TΛRCχI, found on/above, p. 22.

II. SALErs—or SALEettes—paid, of course, and were paid, in *moidores*. Moidores of MOG, which were at that time and continued as the reigning coinage in all of High Thefarie—at least until The Great Devaluation in Spring$_2$ 621, after which nobody's money was any good. But it was not ever thus.

> Trace part of the tangled history of Thefarien coinage from, say, XV/550 until the next Cyclend/Cyclarch, at which ƀsp performed his function. Cite one official document. Do not forgot that the words *moidore* and *murder*, even in Thefarien, come from the same root.

III. The LOSS LEADER, of course, was the grand goal of the SALE, and its achievement the mark of victory, in that vicious commercial confrontation. But what was the LOSS LEADER? The odd representation above gives no real clue, you know. . . except to an expert who knows the answer already. Happily, you are such.

> Discuss the LOSS LEADER at length, explaining What it is, Whence it came, Why it was chosen as The Prize in the SALE, What became of it afterwards, and Why so many risked so much for it. Quote liberally from Eniaca's pamphlet on the subject, the SCROÇAU of 605, commenting on her interest and her reason for publishing. Relate this, if you will, to the other Four Treasures of High Thefarie.

IV. The SALE, of course, was quite a rite, combining violence and pattern in equal measures. Others more learned than ƀsp have noted the resemblance of the standard Shopping Place to grinding molars, and the result of the SALE was very like mastication, come to think of it. But there is more to it than the mere likeness. Business—Thefarien business, of course practiced, ever and always, grinding down and absorption of its natural enemies. The Consumer was always Consumed.

> Trace a day of Shopping during the SALE, tracing the ritual the length and breadth of at least one MallOcclusion and setting forth the procedure for the standard Bargain. Explore the basic metaphor—business as ingestion. Be particularly deft on the strategies and stratagems employed employed by both sides to outdo the other.

V. The defeat disposition of the exSALEettes is not a subject that many wish to discuss, of course. But some grisly souls might, and this it for them:

> Treat the Final Stages, and the aftermath, of the SALE. Cite from Eniaca's Negotiable Instrument, in all its gory detail, to set the record straight. Account for the location of the Final Exchange Booth and the Trauma Centre in the Petty Mall. Don't spare details. *Urrgh.*

VI. One should, of course, attend to advertising. The Mgmnt at MOG mounted quite a campaign that Winter$_1$, and it deserves to be remembered. In all its detail.

> Do so. Reproduce, in all its awfulness, the flyers and banners, in fact, all the material, that was used to herald the coming SALE throughout the lengh and breath of High Thefarie through the first half of 602. Use diagrams, illustrations, whatever. Do not be neutral.

GRAPHICS from the Terminal Praxis, 1993

EXHIBIT A: Survival Medaille awarded to Eniaca Omniversant [deceased], SALE, MOG, XV/602

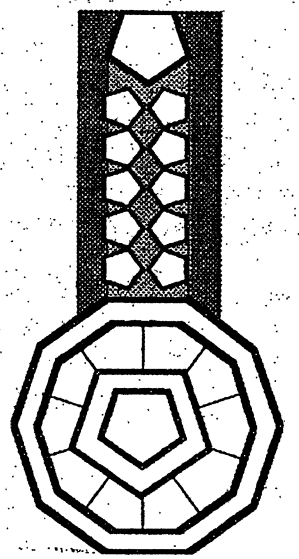


EXHIBIT B: The LOSS LEADER at the SALE, MOG, XV/602

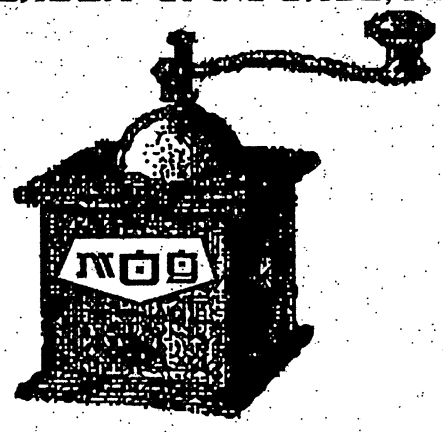


EXHIBIT C: Chart of one-time "PRIMAL LANDS" ca. XV/624

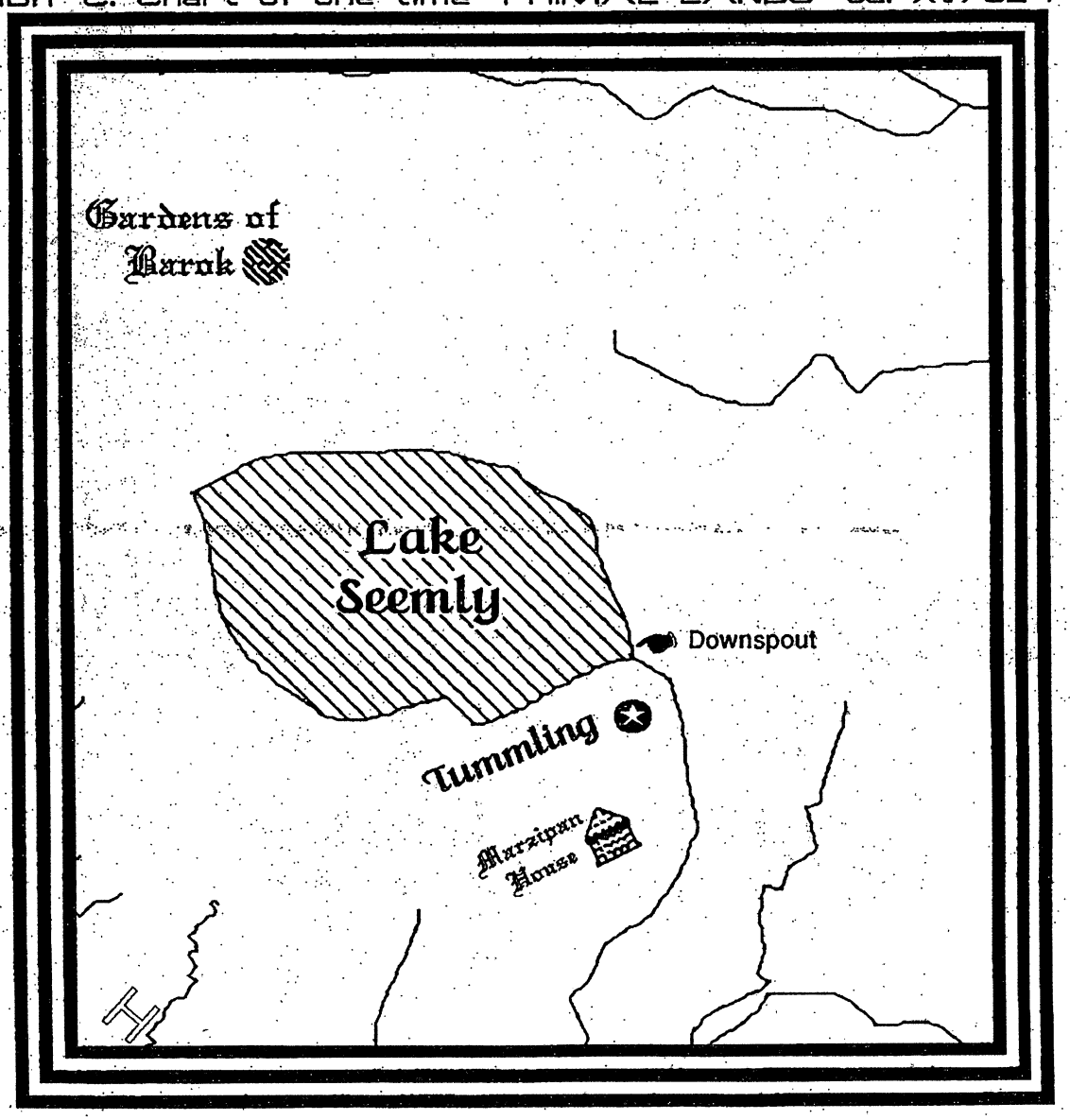


EXHIBIT D: Conjectural chart of "PRIMAL LANDS" Before Cycles

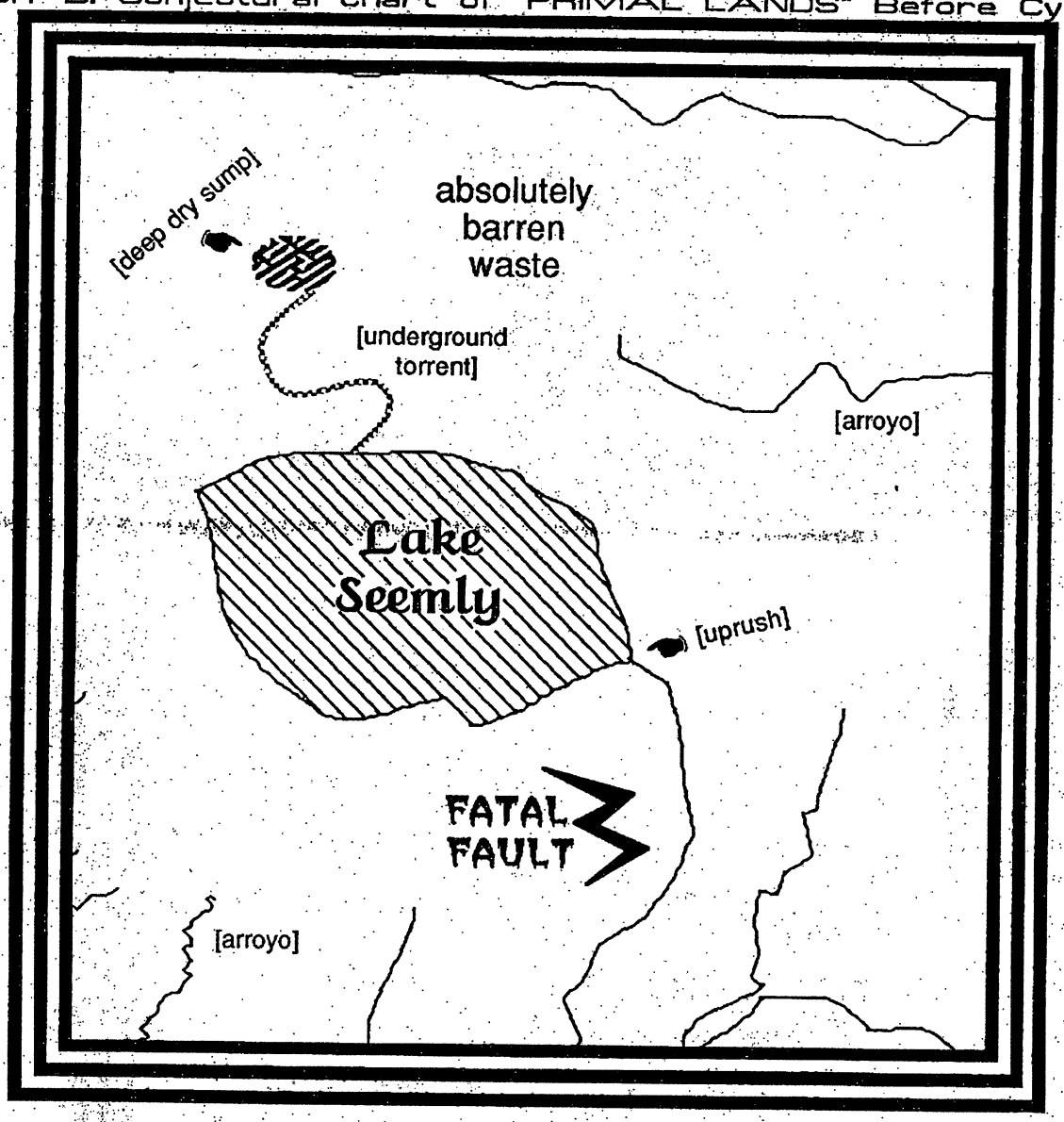
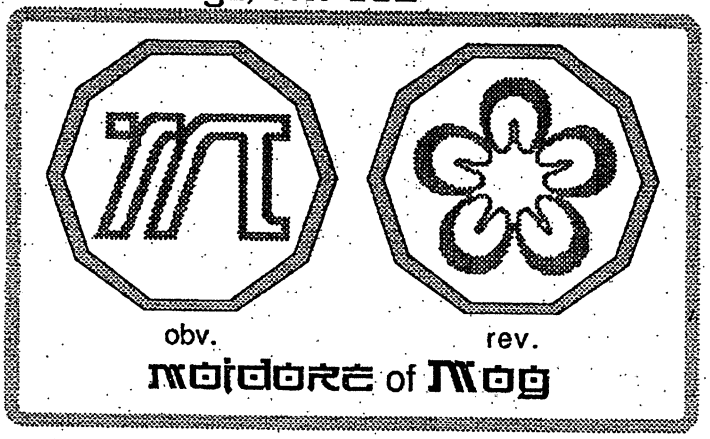


EXHIBIT E: Standard coinage, XV/602



The BRUMMAGEM File, 1

PRELIMINARY ITEMS

For the ***MONDAYS:***

THE FLUSH TIMES OF BRUMMAGEM!

Long Questions for the Monday **Praxis**:

The Disastrous Performance of *GreaseTrap* on the Esplanade at Brummagem, for which see most of the stuff that's been coming out:

To be a bit more specific:

The Production took place, of course, in Summer2, XV/599.

It lasted almost till the end of Acceptance [Act V, sort of].

In this handout, you have been provided with a number of diagrams, plus the marked director's copy of a short excerpt from Dsp's catastrophic WallowPlay GreaseTrap that should refresh your memory about production at the end of the 500's, plus further notes on the history of HT Drama, including a short Dissertation on DABDA that will probably prove of no use at all. Armed with these aids, the Indigo InfoMischMosch, the MAP, and, above all, your staggering knowledge, you should be able to answer, at length, any of the six Long Questions, which will deal with such elementary items as:

RotoRoot to Truth: Drama and Plumbing: A Fundamental Relationship.

GreaseTrap: Lubricity, Lechery, and Laissez-Faire.

Around the Stye: Place, Properties, Paraphernalia, and Wardrobe.

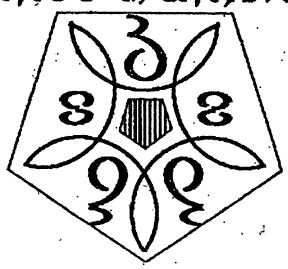
PorcPlay: The Interpenetration of Gender in Text, PoliText, and PolyText of WallowPlay, especially GreaseTrap.

Suckslot Slyness: How To Be an Audience, or, The Basics of Riot.

The SENSORIUM in Function and Structure.

May the **IX XI** never snap on you
in the low moment
of your katabatick
attainment...

TURCE MURILA,



The Structure of Thefarien Drama: a note on DABDA

A play is a *process*, a getting-from-here-to-there. (A Quest, one might almost say—though one would be wrong in many cases.) As in Yr P&G's remarks on *Loves Labors Lost*, it can even be viewed as a system for stopping the talking that has started, but no matter. Whatever the action may be viewed as, it will follow certain rules in unwinding and winding up (or down, as you prefer). These rules were not, so far as anyone knows, laid down by Divine Commandment; there was no flash of lightning or smokepot, followed by the pronunciamento that dramatic action should follow This Plan. Quite to the contrary: these things evolve over time...but become—and more's too often the pity—ferroconcrete *formulas*, to be followed blindly in any and all situations. You may be familiar with the rules for classical European comedy, the Exposition-Development[-Complication]-Reversal-Dénouement[1] *Totentanz* that first enlivened and then throttled theatre. (You *should* be familiar with it, in fact: in a modified ironclad version, it assaults you in every half-hour sitcom you watch.)

High Thefarien drama was, of course, *Other*. In all its forms it partook of—indeed, followed slavishly—its own developed *formula*, one quite unlike ours, save for the minor point that it, too, found its full classical expression in the 5-act drama. The formula—D-A-B-D-A—contained 5 parts, stages, or steps:[2]

Denial
Anger
Bargaining
Depression
Acceptance [3]

How did it work out in practice? Something like this:

Act ΘUN: An Outrageous Proposition has its very existence denied by the Protagonist.
Act ZΛL: Protagonist and others engage in shocking passion—of all sorts—onstage and off.
Act CI: Attempts to get around the Proposition's particulars; in Comedy [so to speak] this is the place for deception, scam, congame.
Act ÇΛ: The plunge into the depths: Reflection, plotting, a good deal of pacing.
Act ΩΛX: Final resignation to the Proposition and The Way Things Are. Frequently, in WallowPlay, accompanied by a really shocking instance of Compensatory Violence. The Happy End, so to speak.

Quite often there was a tag or kicker at the end. Inasmuch as this may be quite long, it was regarded as yet another Act, the sixth of five:

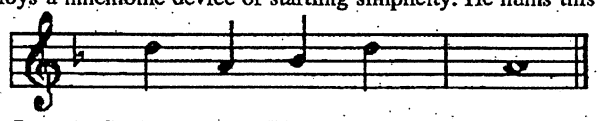
Act ЂUΘ: Summation, denying each and every point that the play has attained. Barbs thrown at Suckers [i.e., Audience].

The WallowPlay GreaseTrap was built on this primitive conceptual framework, as were all Thefarien plays. But it would be impossible to reconstruct the play by using the skeleton and nothing else. GreaseTrap may have been—in fact, indubitably *was*—rough and rude, but, coming forth at the height of dramatic development in ЂΘ, it was hardly *primitive*. If only we had more than a fragment from Act

[1] Or: Prologue—Exposition—Development—Catastrophe—Dénouement. Close enough.

[2] Some of you may note that this bears a startling resemblance to the Five Stages of Grief at Mortality posited by Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. Like you, ƀsp can only marvel at the absolute and utter coincidence. Amazing, no?

[3] To remember this, ƀsp employs a mnemonic device of startling simplicity: He hums this little tune, D-A-Bb-D-A:



and there it is, fresh in his mind. But why B-*flat*, you ask? Well, B-natural isn't gloomy enough, or *locative* enough. And besides, the Germans use *B* [the letter] to indicate the sound of B-flat. So there.

CJ, the bargaining Act, we might know more. . . but what am I saying? We *do* know more; in fact, we Know It All, because You were there, and your memory is like a sponge! If the matter arises, You can even indicate precisely what it was about the forthrightly feminine line delivered by SIMPLE—played, as it happened, by ϑsp—that touched off the Riot at the first performance, when, in Act ϖλχ, he, or rather she, said:

CλΘ knows I'm willing, sailor...

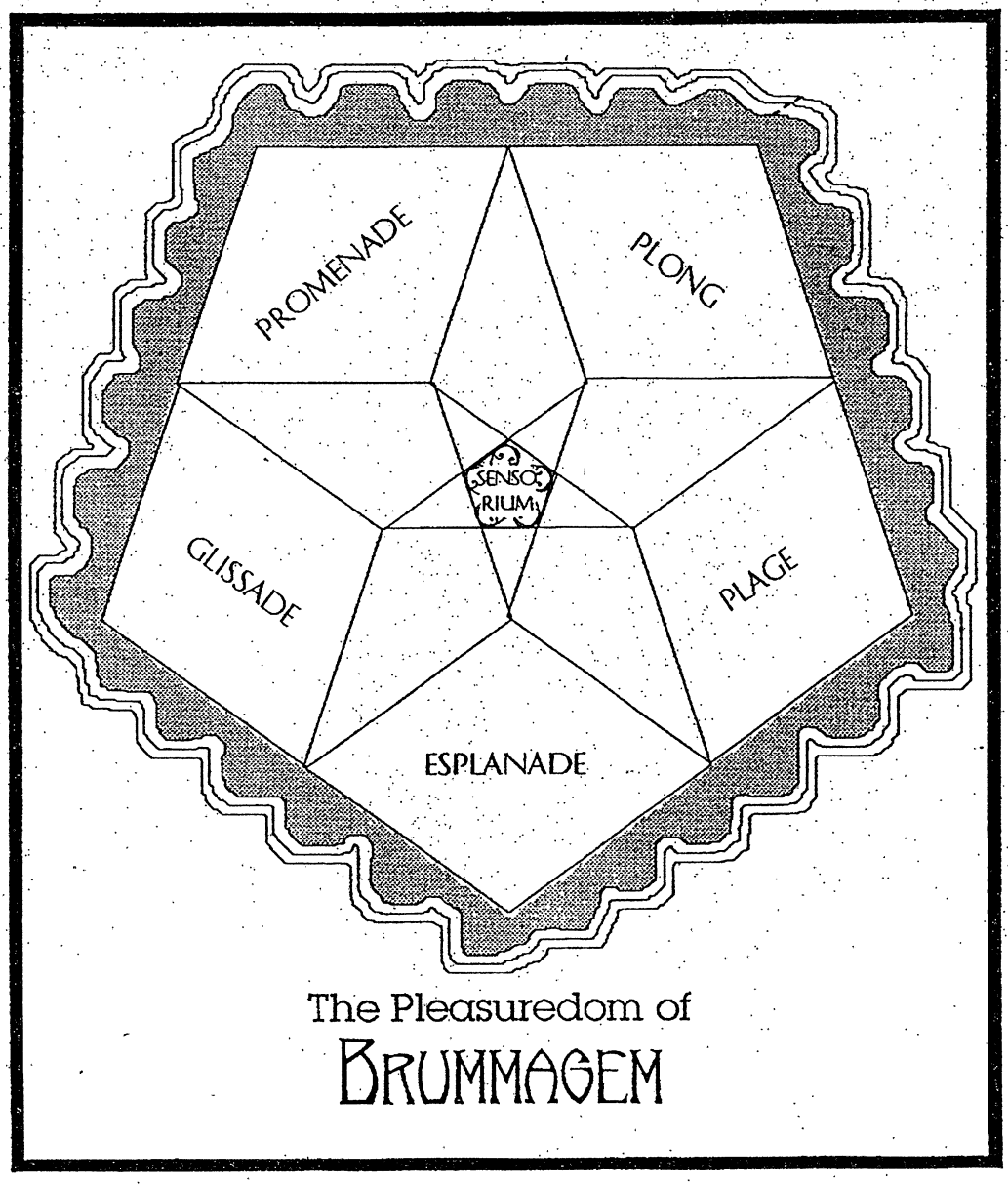
doubtless to the panting HOTFLANKS—played by Eniaca, as it happened. Oh, we are in luck!

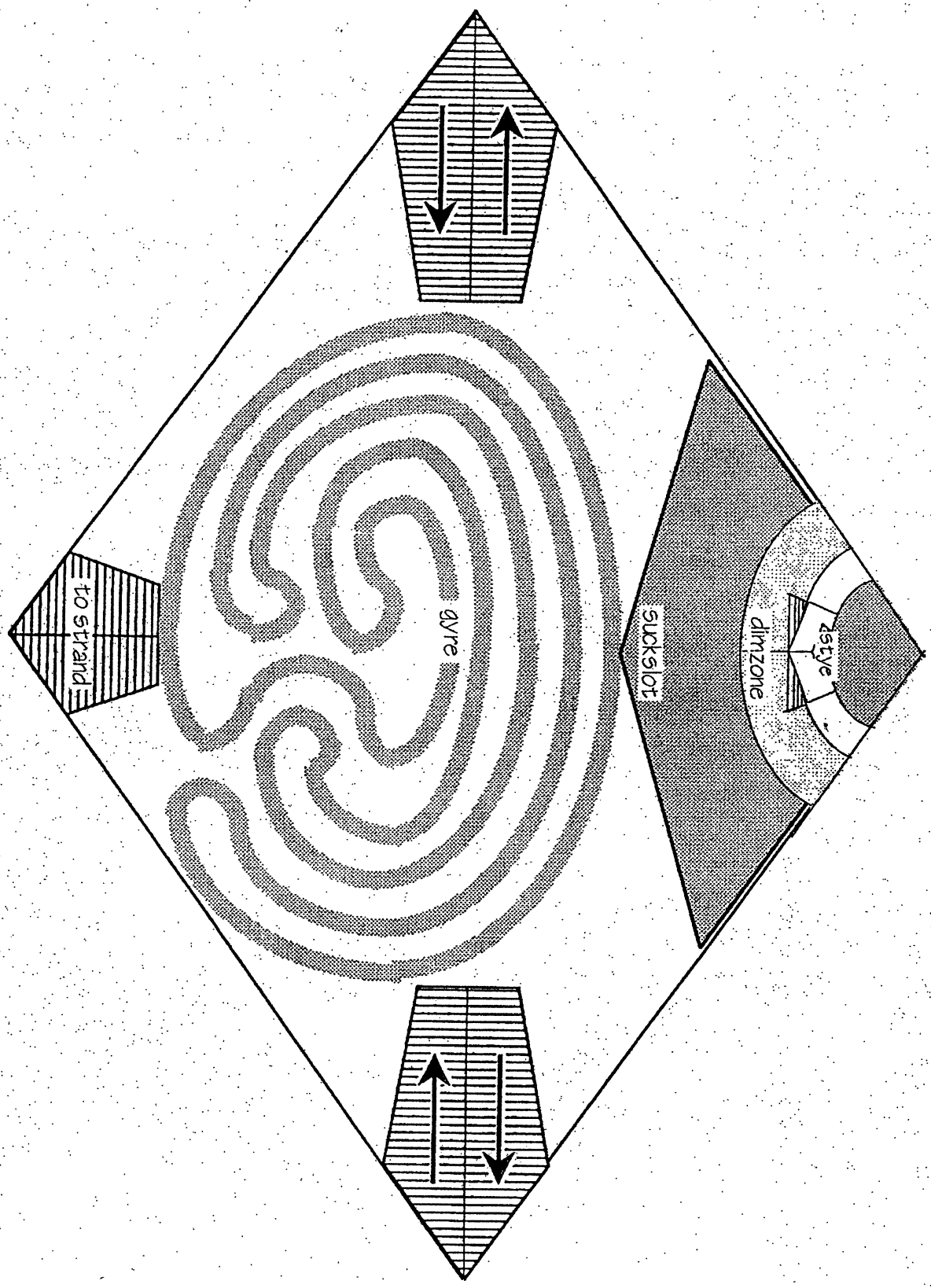
Three Really Rather Pregnant Statements on High Thefarien Drama

1] "The audience is always at risk."

2] "Know your set, and you know the play."

3] "Actors today—they don't have it *here*. . ."
[*accompanied by a slap on the speaker's right buttock*]

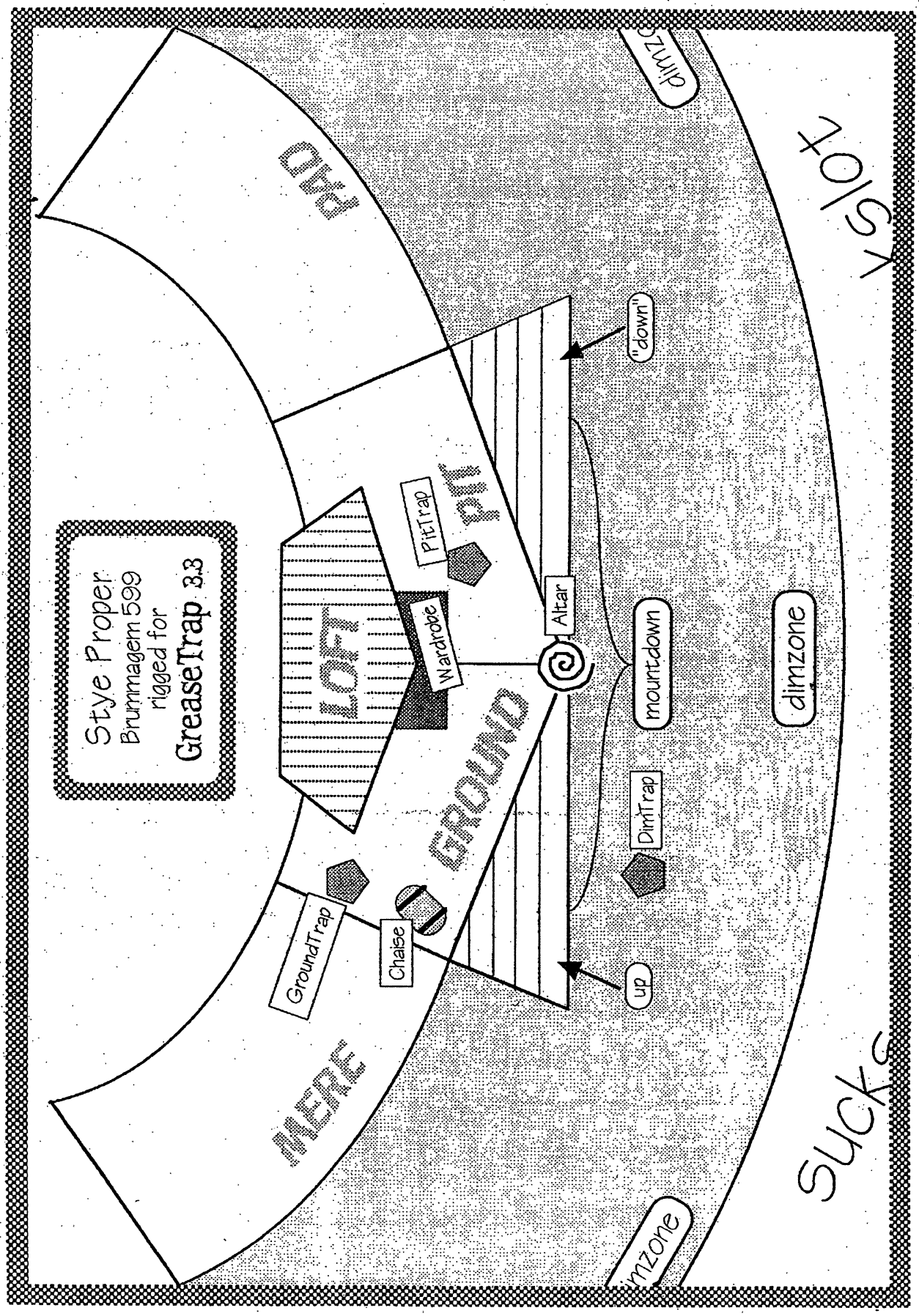




The Brummagem Esplanade

[site of play & riot]

Summer 2, XV/599

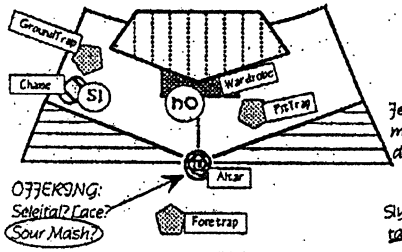

Stye Proper
Brummagem 599
rigged for
GreaseTrap 3.3
PAD
LOFT
PIT
GROUND
MERE
PitTrap
Wardrobe
Altar
"down"
mountdown
dimzone
DimTrap
GroundTrap
Chaise
up
dimzone
SUCKS
YSlot

GreaseTrap or The Plumber's Friend

ADDRESS BOOK

3.3

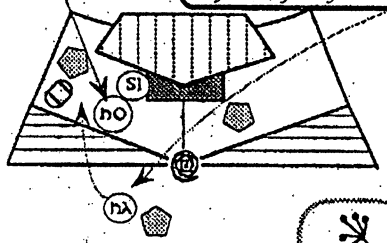
SH: HO & GI: SI
to them BA: HA
latewatch BO: TU & SO: CA

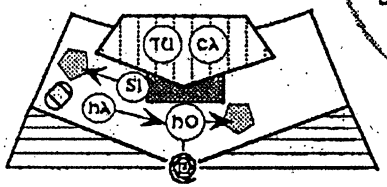


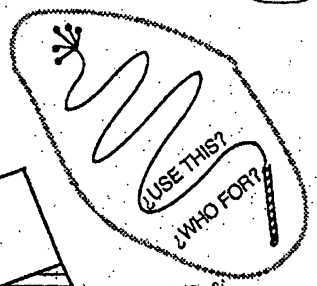
OFFERING: Seleital? Lace? Sour Mash?

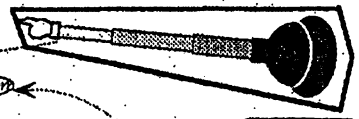
Note Cross.

CRASH! BANG! SLOSH! Foretrap door bursts up suddenly. Pair spring together, guiltily.









Moves to wardrobe clutching plunger and brandishing shornbloom

Seductive hiss: Yesssss.

HOTFLANKS

Real feeling!

Oho. Is nothing. For texture yes.

At chaise, pert. SIMPLE

He has crossed his hocks, all unknowing of the effect on HO, who nearly falls into Wardrobe.

Fetching, obtuse country maidenboy bit. Don't hit dialect too hard.

Oooh. Twouldn't be some of them there Erotic Additives they joke about at the shop, now, would they?

DON'T MISS THAT DOUBLE ENTENDRE HERE !!!

Sly gesture. Make audience taste the shopsludge.

HOTFLANKS

Oho. Could nothing be more distant from veracity. Completely inert, yes. Supplying merely good company in tub.

Beat before questionable term is proffered. Bites tongue, twice.

HAPAX (shooting up MountDown into Ground)

Harumph. No one here but us land ords, conducting an utter random search for Erotic Additives. Any such here?

Dangerous! Dangerous!

She is a really dirty old man.

HO quickly shoves plunger into reticule.

HOTFLANKS

Oho. Is risible, no? Pleasing to checking ~~premises~~. Nothing concealed.

Sits down suddenly on reticule. Winces.

Very nervous

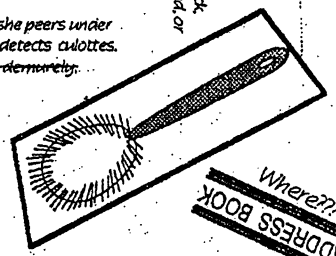
HAPAX

premises Harumph. That's just what I'll do.

—You wear these frilly things? Under the standard naval uniform?

Chi can do at least 5 mins on premise check, but restraint is needed, or pacing dies.

At end of search, she peers under HO's jumper and detects culottes. Shock. She ~~recoils demurely~~ pretends to faint.



HOTFLANKS

Oho. Is helping on while away long watches in briny.

Salute to flag, if have one.

Playing for time. Sidles towards pit-trap.

HAPAX

Harumph. I'll bet.

More search of HO's integuments.

—Well, nothing here. But I've got you in my gaze. You'd better watch it, sister.

—And you, too, bud.

Makes meaning fully for SI.

HOTFLANKS

!!! TUFU and CAΘ assemble on loft. !!!

Oho. Ohoo. Now getting to it.

—Before you plunging allowing me to observing, is being more lubricious, am meaning nutritious, if undress first.

Codewords. Especial emphasis.

Oh-oh. BiSexual preplay! If we can slip this past the audience, we're home free.

SIMPLE

Coy, coy, coy.

Oooh. Undress? You think I should? (He loosens a deloid buckle.)

Breakdown. SI dives deftly into groundtrap: HO sprints madly for pittrap, pursued by HA, beats her, dives in. HA registers extreme diffidence as she gazes upward to face the hideous censure of TUFU and CAΘ. WHITEOUT.

SmellCue woodrot

SmellCue cinnamon

SmellCue sowsweat

Where???

ADDRESS BOOK

SmellCue allspice & H_2S

DRIP DLTIM woodnote PAFLIM

DROP DLTIM woodnote PAFLIM

TRICKLE DLTIM woodnote PAFLIM

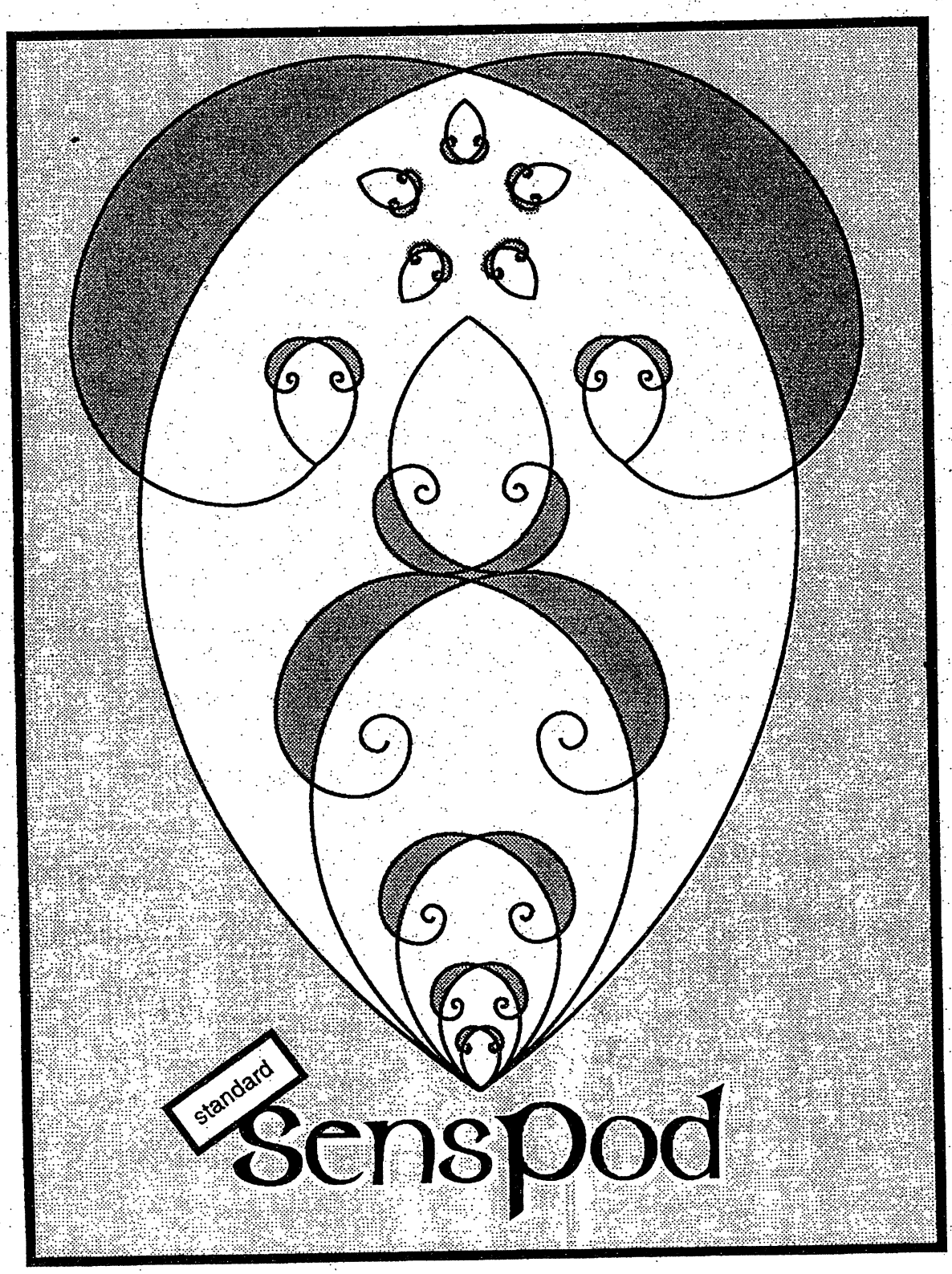
GURGLE MECTUB RUMBLEBUMBLE ATTATAT

GURGLE MECTUB RUMBLEBUMBLE ATTATAT

GURGLE MECTUB RUMBLEBUMBLE ATTATAT

BAM BAM BAM ATTATAT

PTHWATT PTHWATT PTHWATT MEDDIX


standard
SensPod

The BRUMMAGEM File, 2

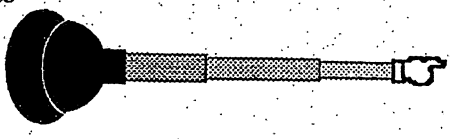
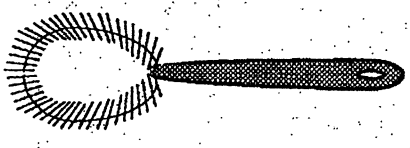
From the Identification Questions from the *Monday* Terminal Praxis, 1993

A.2: PROPS & SUCH[1]

Your P&G, verbal type that he is, always used to associate drama with *language*. Oh, he *knew* that these playey things were *put on*, of course, and had even been in some of them, but his profession dealt with words as words, and, for all his connections with practical theatre, joyful as they may have been, he found himself consistently, for a good deal of his life, approaching a play, any play, as a compendium of inscribed items, with no particular worry as to whether said items had ever really been uttered. And much less did he care about *how* an utterance might go, and what the utterer might be engaged in when s(he) gave voice to what was on the page.

This lasted until his late twenties, when he was engaged in translating Aristophanes for, well, Americans, and gradually discovered that he had to figure out the performance, had to know and show what people were doing on stage, and even *what they might have in their hands* as they modulated the classic lines. Yes, O Best Beloved, he had to concern himself with *stage properties*, those orphans of the dramatic storm, because they were very important: one may speak the very same words on a stage twice, holding different objects each time, and the meaning will be very different—if, say, the actor is holding an *enchos*, a sword, the first time, and a *skoramis*, a chamber pot, the second. Things, Your P&G, found, are right down at the base of drama, especially comedy—and comedy was what he did. He was converted, at least partially, to being a thing person.

And it is as well that he was, for ðsp's lubricious, WallowPlay, GreaseTrap, or *The Plumber's Friend*, was positively loaded with objects, full of *stuff*. You may have noted this when wrestling with the messy fragment of ðsp's directorial copy of GT 3.3, which featured the plain view use of two certainly germane *things*—items that, in their own way, encapsulated a good deal of GT's meaning. I refer, of course, to

the  and the 

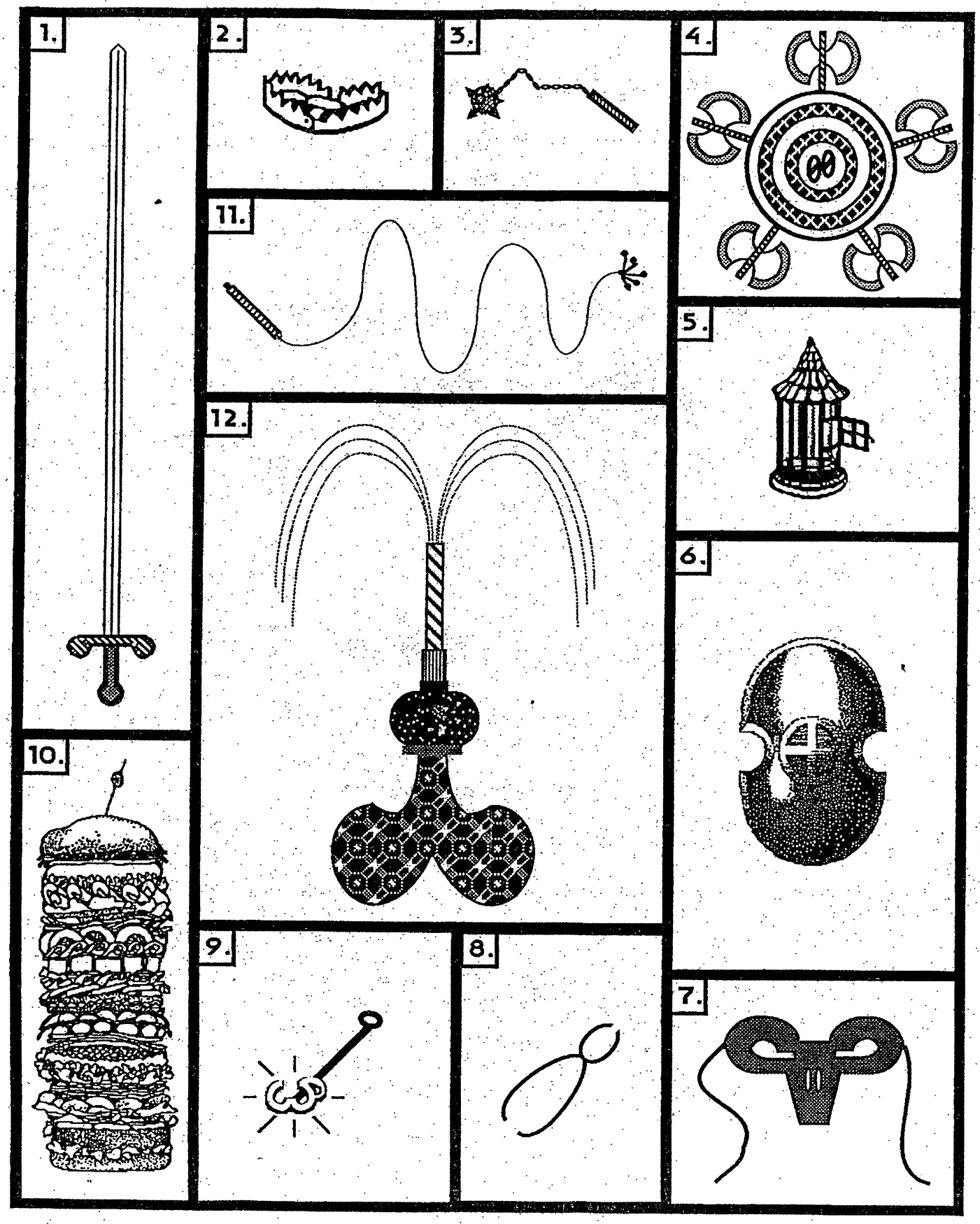
Plunger/Ticklestick "Shornbloom"

Important isn't the word. They were/are *central* to what that curious near-comedy, whose performance set the drama in High Thefarie back nearly to its beginnings. We possess no more of ðsp's playbook, more's the pity. . . but we *do*, luckily, have a clutch of curious graphics that can only depict props from that play, given the similarity of #11 to an item in the scribblings to GT 3.3. Yes, we have more than mere words! And, oh blessedly, You Know What They Are!

On the next page are depicted 12 (TWELVE) props from GreaseTrap, of which you should choose 3 (THREE) for your knowing treatment. In each case, answer the following questions: 1st: What, precisely, is it? 2nd: Describe it fully—size, material, etc. 3rd: At what point, under what circumstances, by whom, and how is/was it used in the Play? Treat this thoroughly if briefly. 4th: One of the three, of course, was vital to GT in meaning and performance. Treat this with especial care.

---

[1] This may be construed to come under the heading of Dirty Pool, inasmuch as the ID's have traditionally been kept rigorously from the subject, theme, whatever of the Long Questions. But this one seemed so self-cocking that I couldn't really pass it by. . . and besides, by the time I'd rescued the computer from the seventh crash, I had too much time invested in the graphics, tawdry as they are, to do anything else.


1.
2.
3.
4.
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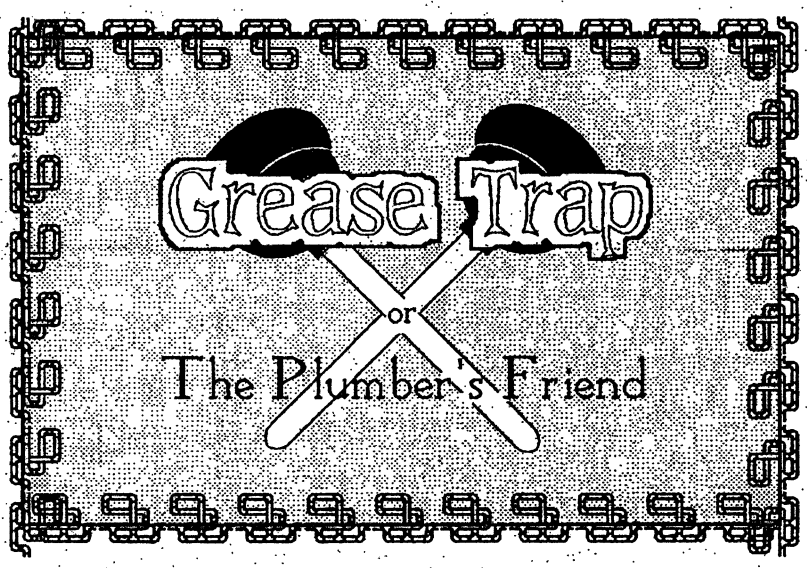
12.

From the LONG QUESTIONS from the

Monday Terminal Praxis, 1993



—plus, of course, attendant attractions and distractions at the Pleasuredom (*sic*) of BRUMMAGEM.

I. Drama, of course, holds the mirror up to nature. But what sort of a mirror? Does the image come back reversed, as in our usual mirrors, where mirroree waggles a right hand, and mirrorer flaps a left in return? Or does it flip the image over, so that right waves back at right? And is the image accurate? Same size, allowing for distance? Or does the mirror compress the original, or stretch it out, or knock off the corners, or oscillate straight edges into sine waves, or reflect a reflection of a reflection? Or. . . Enough of that, probably. I only asked because it's hard to use evidence like this—that is, the evidence of GreaseTrap, which is all we have of HT drama, to establish the true nature of that fascinating question: How did the sexes relate to each other in High Thefarie? Relate they did: we know that on the evidence of ȣsp and Eniaca's *six* [*tsk*!] marriages, and their [at least two] children, who went to camp. The number of remarriages would be unusual in the RW, but, otherwise, it could be here, it really could. Except. Except for the embarrassing facts that Thefarien females were oviparous, and the males sat on the eggs till they hatched, and father was thus remembered as mother. And the strange cross-dressing that went on: Where did ȣsp get so many *culottes*? And the answer is, From the Mauve Wyvern tour in 599, of course, *because MEN played WOMEN's roles in HT drama, and vice versa.* But when you say that, what have you said? What is a male role in a theatre where all males play females? And culottes are really a rather neutral sort garment, anyway; now, if ȣsp had worn skirts, we'd know where we were. But did men *usually* wear culottes, or just in the theatre, or. . . ? And then there's the matter of ȣsp's pronouns in the Playbook to GreaseTrap 3.3: *Hotflanks* is referred to as she, and so we presume that ȣsp played the role. . . but he

might have been talking about the *actor*, in which case it would be Eniaca's role, since it's certainly the more aggressive part. . . But why do I go on like this. *You* know what the Truth is, O Best Beloved, and so, please, please, tell me. Because it all comes down to a question abou the one other surviving fragment, probably from Motion [which is to say, Act] 2, where either *Hotflanks* or *Simple* says:

CΛΘ knows I'm willing, sailor.

Tell who said that—Eniaca or **ϑsp**—and everything falls into shape.

> Discuss, authoritatively, the question of GENDER in High Thefarie, using as a prime source the Second Motion (Act) of GreaseTrap—which you saw, and know so thoroughly that you can cite it from memory. Motion 2, with its stress on "shocking passion," can establish the relative states of the sexes beyond a doubt, but draw from your encyclopedic knowledge of Thefarie as well as the play.

II. Intimations and hints, of course, have already asserted, in this **Praxis**, that the plunger/ticklestick conveys a great deal about Thefarien drama. But why plumbing? What conceivable reason could **ϑsp** have had to form The Mauve Wyvern Mime Troupe and Domestic Plumbing Company? Come down to it, in High Thefarie, what did Drama have to to with Plumbing, and vice versa?

> Trace the formation of Mauve Wyvern and show, conclusively, how Motion 2 of GreaseTrap, with the hints in the preserved fragments of 3.3, explore both fields in terms of the other. Get to the Truth behind the common statement about **ϑsp**, that as an actor he was an excellent plumber, and as a plumber a topnotch actor. A instance of deep praise, of course—but proved it. Show that the plunger/ticklestick is a perfectly accurate symbol of these two wedded areas. And answer the burning question: Why was GreaseTrap (**ΘUPL-ΘΛL**) called GreaseTrap?

III. Drama, of course, is Conflict. We're raised on that, here in the West of the RW. And so in High Thefarie, but with a difference: Conflict, certainly, but Conflict between Whom? Here we can posit the source of drama, in an archetypal set-to between Old King and New King, or chorus and single speaker/singer, or two contenders, or male/female. But in High Thefarie, the basic quarrel, battle, war was always between Actor and Audience. Drama is more than Conflict there: It's *assault*. And the enemy is *Them*, sitting out in the Suckslot, encroaching on the Dimzone, daringly darting at the Stye itself. It's no wonder that GreaseTrap bombed. The wonder is that it got to Motion 4 at all.

> Discuss the catastrophic Failure of GreaseTrap at the Stye at Brummagem in 599. Break the happenings down, account for what precisely it was in the play that so infuriated the audience, and comment learnedly and perspicaciously on the strategies and stratagems employed by both sides. Be sure to use your diagrams.

IV. Actors, of course, in failed plays die—though not in the Thefarien sense—twice, and most horribly: First, at the actual point when the play bombs; second, when they read the reviews. High Thefarie, blessed land, had no theatrical reviewers. But never mind that. *You* were there, O Best Beloved.

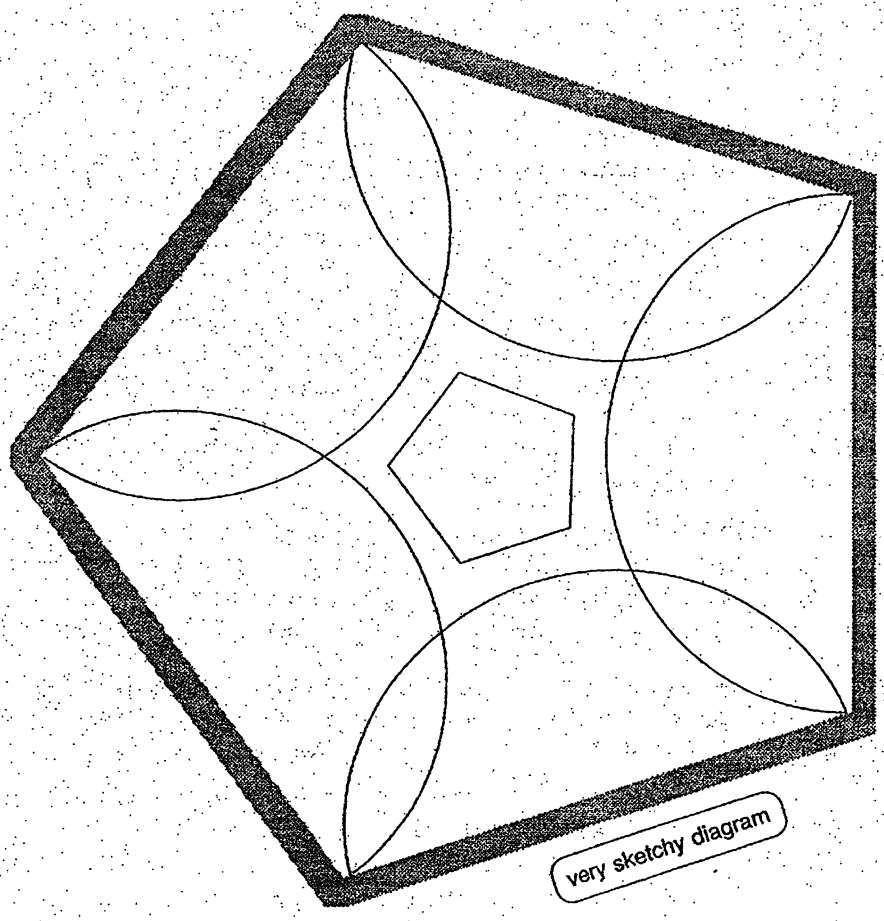
> Review the one and only performance of GreaseTrap, assigning the manifold blames and the infinitesimal praises. Summarize the play. Note deftly the inept use of the stage, the violations of dramatic rules, the absolutely awful acting (give instances), and anything else nasty that occurs to you. Quote. Be witty, deft, and hideous.

V. Central, of course, to BRUMMAGEM was the **SENSORIUM**—but not merely in location. Granted, the non-initiate might easily suppose it to be no more than titillation. Given that the main thrust of this **Praxis** is the GreaseTrap catastrophe, it would be quite easy for the non-initiate to mistake it, in spite of its placement, as no more than a show.

But it was not. Trace the visit of a typical tourist—ꝺsp will do—through the SENSORIUM, both the general route through the entire place, and then, in detail, through the senspod devoted to the Finger, which is to say the sense of Touch. Utilize the diagrams, naming the stops and explaining the Order and Pattern. Do not exclude Morality. Or Religion, if so inclined. Was the SENSORIUM sensuous, sensual, or sensible?

VI. Awful, of course, purely awful: He lost his *Address Book*? What all the shouting for? Why should ꝺsp have been so upset? Which is, of course, the Question. He lost it, remember, spang in the center of the Blessed Boudoir, center of the SENSORIUM, center of BRUMMAGEM. And what was in that small inky bombshell? And what was he doing? And where, precisely where, did he lose it?

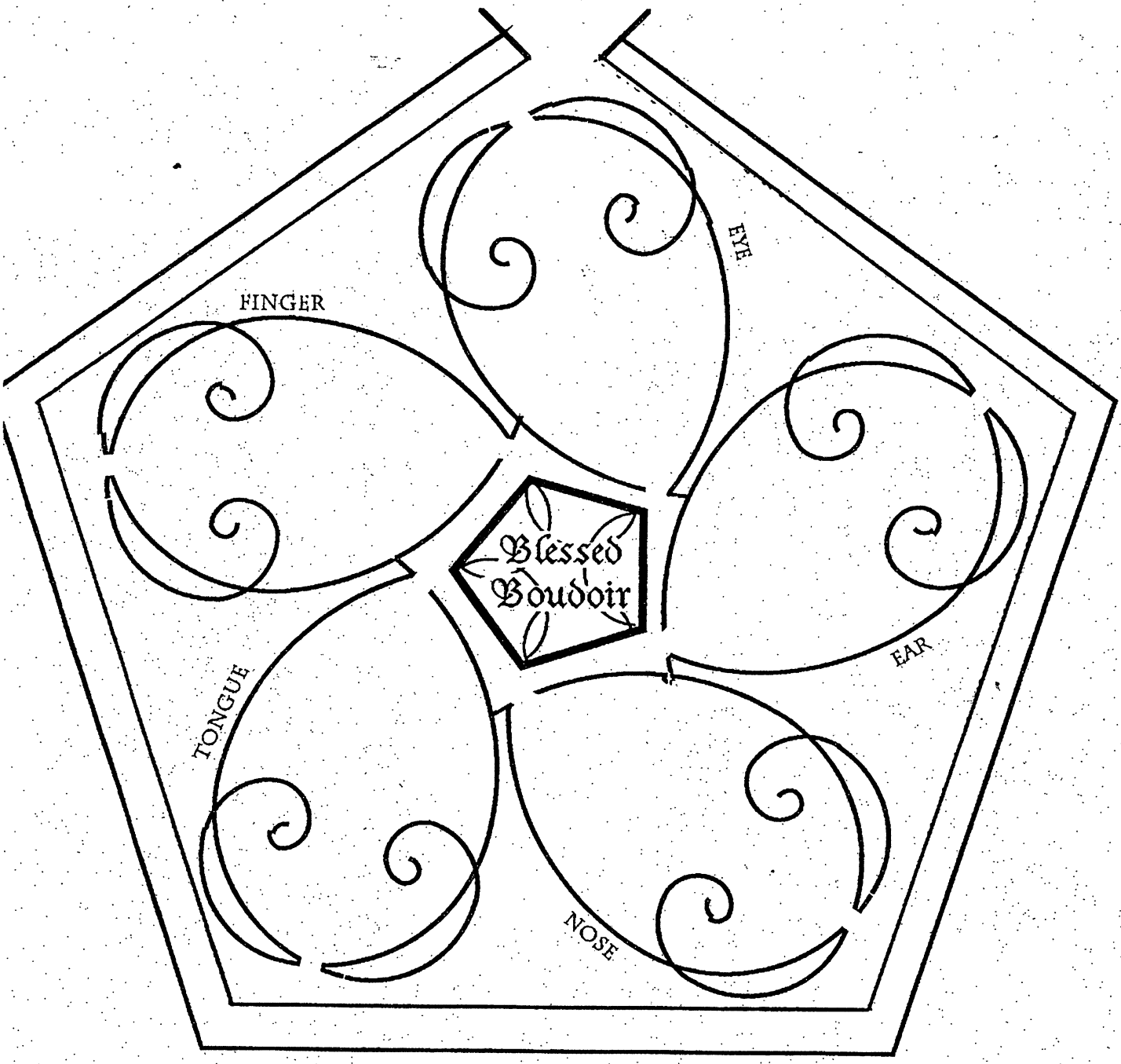
Trace and explain the loss of ꝺsp's Address Book, topographically, historically, and even personally: he was very flustered. But so was BRUMMAGEM. And High Thefarie was never the same. Use the diagrams, of course.



The Blessed Boudoir

[CONGREGATIO OMNIVM SENSVVM]

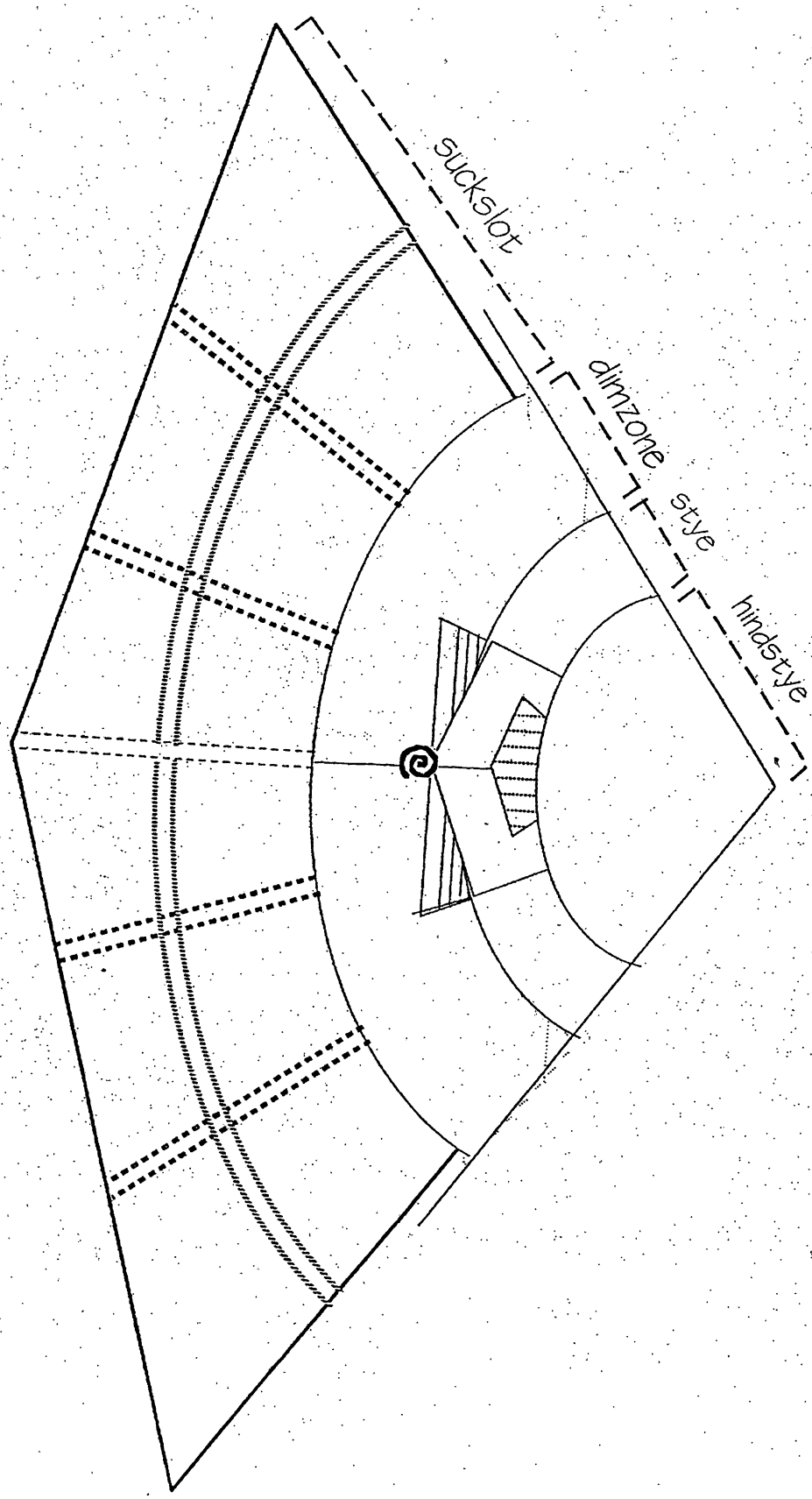
in the SENSORIUM



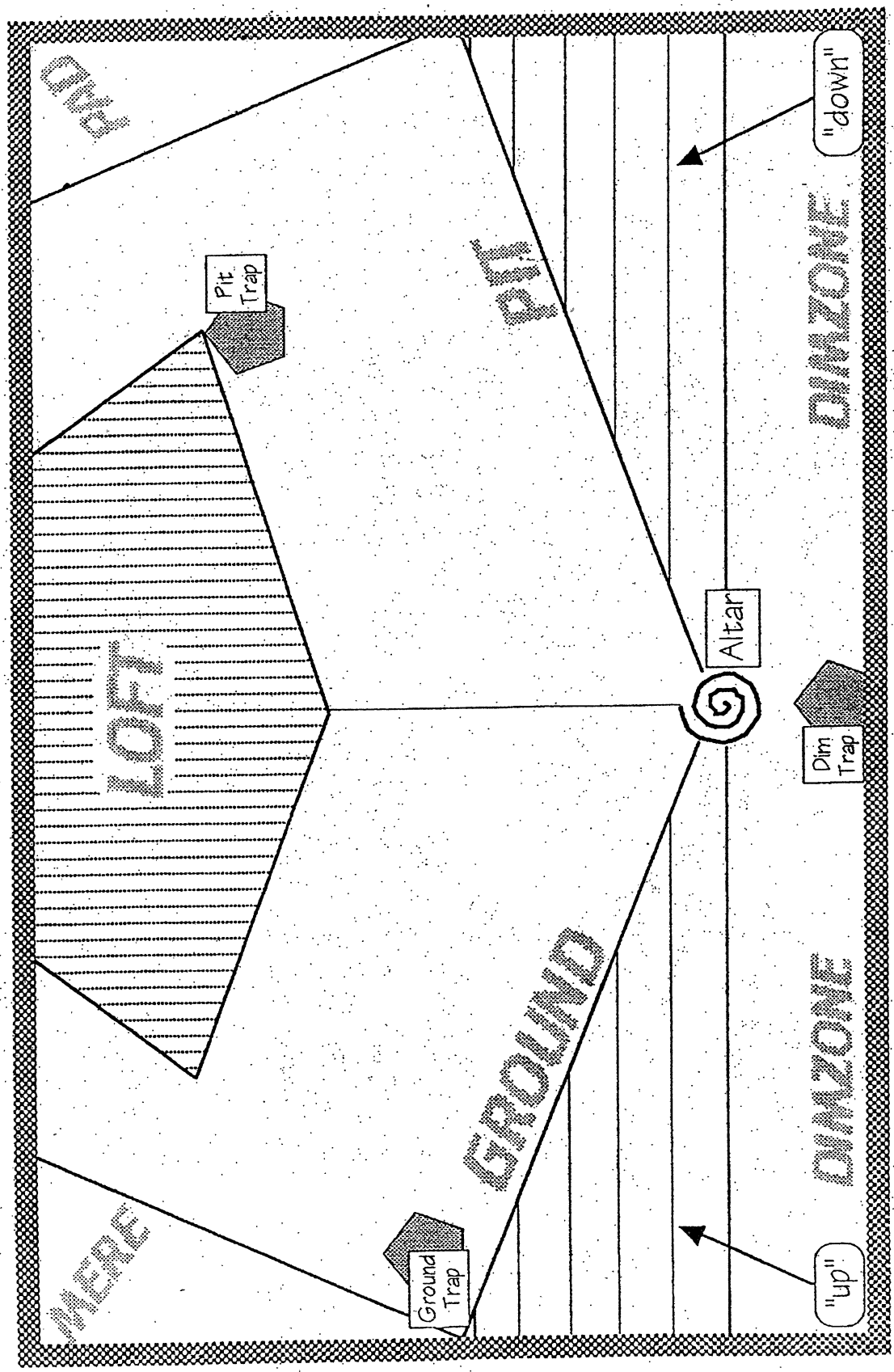
Sensorium showing **Blessed Boudoir**

[CONGREGATIO OMNIVM SENSVVM]

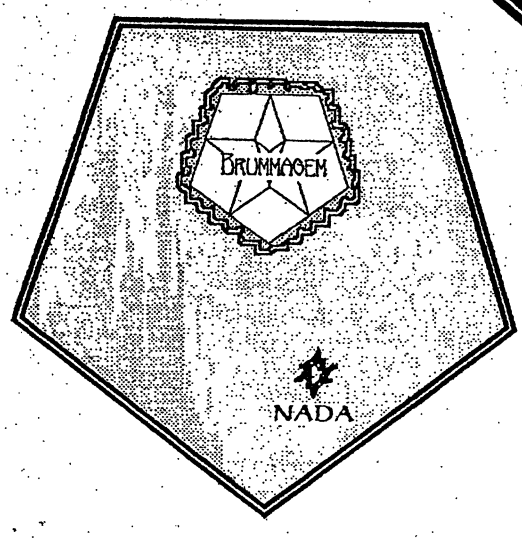
and **SensPods**

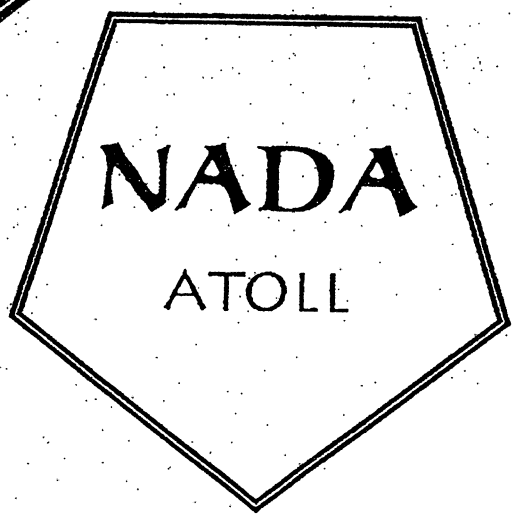


OverView of the Piggestye [Theatre]
on the Esplanade, BRUMMAGEM



Basic StyePlot: GreaseTrap 2


BRUMMAGEM
NADA


NADA
ATOLL

Identification Lists
from the Terminal Praxeis, 1993

Friday: *Here we go again, off to the Bits and Pieces, the Selected Shorts which test the working order of your Memory's extremely Random Access. But never fear; the facts are all there somewhere; all you have to do is dredge them up, brush them off, set them forth tenderly in the light. All that it requires is Brute Recollection, gross and simple. Were it not Memory, but* Invention, *that were required, in some unthinkable scenario where you actually had to* Make Things Up, *well, I would worry about you; the strain, the risk of absolute and utter failure—that would be more than formidable.*

☛ *As it is, though, my only concern is that you might spend too much time on the ensuing trivial pursuits. An hour should be more than enough. Count your blessings.*

1: COMESTIBLES

"Food, food, glorious food!" sing Oliver and the boys, and their celebration is echoed in most cultures. The *tune* is often different, of course, but the fact remains: People—no, check that—*Beings* Like to EAT. Nature, provident as always, sees that species, genera—whatever—preserve themselves by a distinct attraction to their edible sustenance, and to the processes attendant upon it. In the their development of myriads various mystiques surrounding Food, its Preparation, Serving, and Ingestion, the High Thefariens were very like us.

When it came to the particulars of Food and its Rituals, however, they differed sharply. ðsp, who had suffered from a tendency towards extreme fleshiness in his RW existence, spent his first years in High Thefarie seriously underweight: not only could he not get used to what his hosts put into their mouths, but he proved hideously maladroit at picking up the myriad twists and turns of decreed behavior connected with it, having been raised on such barbarous customs as "Clean Your Plate!" and "Don't Play With Your Food!" It was not until his first **PUBLIC DISGRACE** in 580, resulting from the Grand Banquet tendered him as Victor of Trolltrial at Enphurli, that he buckled down to eating in real earnest and became, in this if nothing else, a model Thefarien, one who served well—and often, in the "Food War" of 595. And later, pairs and pairs of ruptured culottes in the six-teens and six-twenties attested to his Good Citizenship.

Below are listed 24 (TWENTY-FOUR) [1] standard Thefarien dishes—appetizers, entrees, desserts. Choose 3 (THREE) for your knowing treatment. In each case, answer the following questions:

1st: What, precisely, is it?
2nd: How is it prepared?
3rd: When—time of day, season of year (if applicable), holiday (if applicable), &c.—is it eaten?
4th: Where, and in what circumstances, is it eaten?
5th: How is it eaten?
6th: What are the results of eating it wrongly?

☛ BE SURE to choose items which demonstrate ðsp's initial feelings at encountering Thefarien cuisine—feelings which, as you well remember, varied from stony diffidence to downright gut-wrenching disgust.

Oh. Choose ONE from Column A, ONE from Column B, and ONE from Column C.

---

[1] Twenty-four? Why twenty-four? Well, there are so many goodies that I couldn't really choose, and I wanted you to have the same glorious feeling. No, don't thank me...

A	B	C
1. Patty Moult	9. MochaΩλχ	17. Jellied χλçΩλχ
2. Taxes Tossed	10. Glazed Quacksalver	18. Quickstripe Melissas
3. Moat Leaf	11. Gefilte Festschrift	19. Steamed Garottes
4. GlomBake	12. Infarcted Winkles	20. Nadir Nosh
5. Skewllops	13. Shoat in the Dark	21. UpsideDown Surprise
6. Ostinato Chutney	14. PineWheel Potage	22. Pass-the-Fazool
7. Crotchetts	15. Comeapart Compote	23. Œufs'l
8. Two-Gopher Easy	16. Favored Curry	24. Çupadilla

2: FALSE FRIENDS

Those of you who have studied a second language will be ruefully familiar with those items in your new acquisition sometimes lumped under the arresting title of "FALSE FRIENDS"—words and phrases which resemble ones in your first language so closely that you presume, quite naturally, that they possess the same meanings. . . until you find out, to your cost, that they denote/connote something quite different. One of the standard examples for English speakers learning French, for example, is the innocuous utterance *en effet*. The natural tendency for the tyro is to take it as equivalent to in "in effect," only to discover that it comes out as "really" or "actually" or even "in actuality," which, in context, can cast a quite different light on the surroundings. Given the American ineptitude in other tongues, such phenomena can sometimes have far-reaching consequences. I need only cite the Versailles Conference after WW I, where Woodrow Wilson and his entourage took extreme umbrage at a request made by the French government, which had merely *asked* that something be done, using the standard French verb for "ask," *demander*. But the Americans, as ever bumptiously conscious that they and they alone had saved Western Civilization, understood it as equivalent to DEMAND, and the fat was in the fire. What right had those Frogs to DEMAND *anything* from the great US of A? And the repercussions lasted, and helped bring about WW II. *Demander* was a FALSE FRIEND; it looked like "demand," but really merely meant "ask."

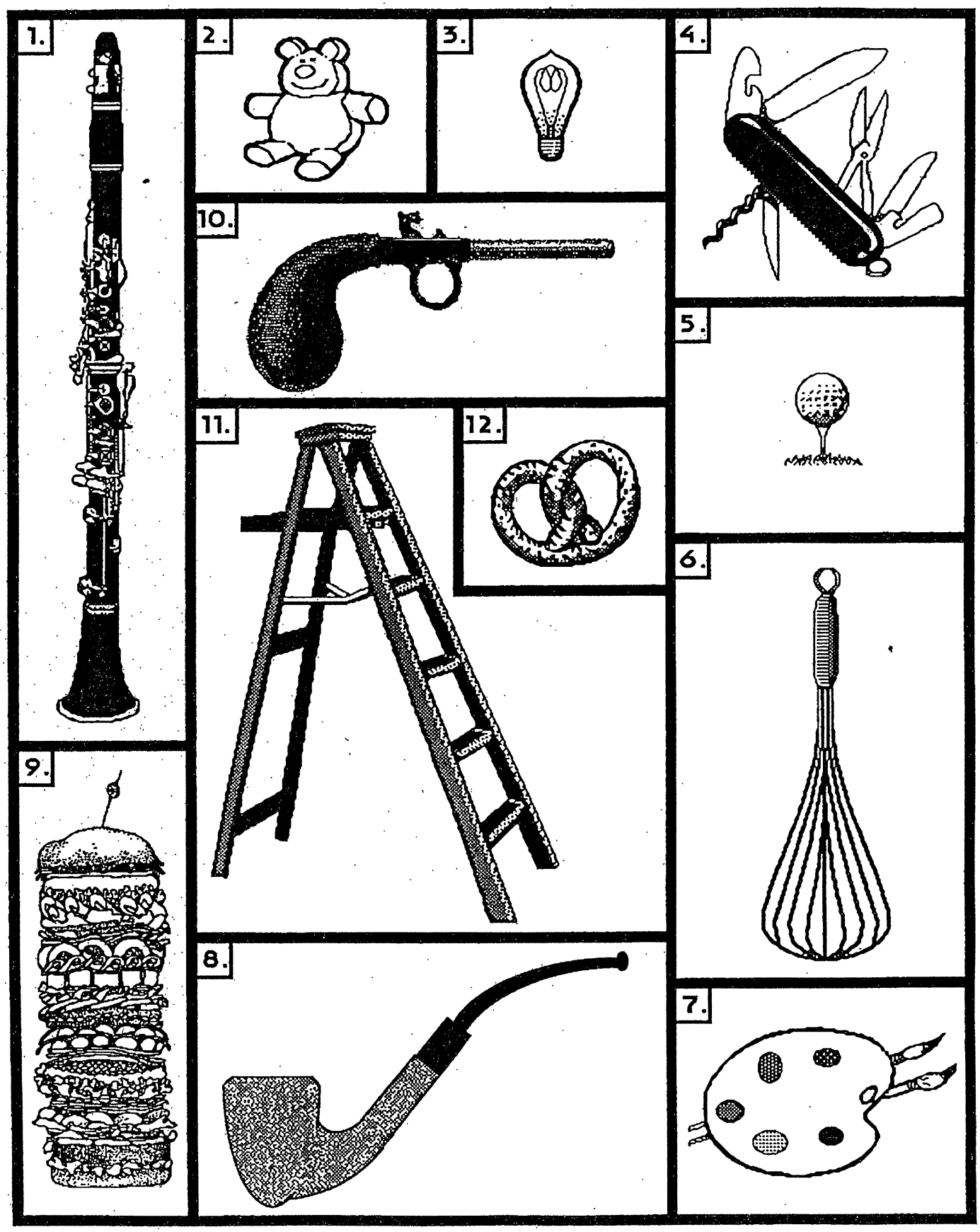
There are FALSE FRIENDS, embodiments of cultural ambiguity, in other areas than the purely verbal. Dsp was constantly in hot water throughout his half-century in High Thefarie because he consistently misinterpreted *things*—a myriad of objects which looked exactly, or nearly exactly, like midAmerican items with which he had grown up. He would treat, or use, or react to, a given object in the appropriate RW way. . . only to find that only to find that he had committed a dreadful social gaffe, or started a war, or begun a most inconvenient relationship. You can recall instantly the dreadful affair at Bolsena in 575, when he picked his teeth with a votive object, or at Vei as late as 623, when he "salted" his "soup" only to find that he had utterly polluted—beyond any hope of purification or recompense—the last remains of the holiest hermit in the InBack.

On the next page, you will find representations of 12 (TWELVE) of these FALSE FRIENDS—objects, etc., closely resembling (fairly) common items in the RealWorld, which Dsp misinterpreted ruinously. Choose 3 (THREE) for your knowing treatment. In each case, give:

1st, the Presumptive Nature of the object: What did Dsp think it was?
2nd, Its Real Nature: What was it, actually, in High Thefarie?
3rd, Dsp's mistake: What did he do with it?
4th, the dolorous and dreadful results of that mistake: What disaster, large or small, did it cause?

BE SURE to locate object, mistake, and results in Space and Time and Circumstance. Where and when and in what specific situation in High Thefarie did each chosen instance occur?

Let me ask—not demand—quite that you be merciful in your treatment of Dsp's, well, lack of perspicacity in all these affairs. Dull, he was; imperceptive, he was; stupid, he may well have been. But none of it was intentional, he meant well, he was under pressures—you know the bit. Besides, it's almost Christmas. Falalalalah, lalah lah lah, and all that.


1.
2.
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10.
11.
12.

Monday: High Thefarie may seem to be going through a drab patch, what with the nuts-and-bolts orientation of the material that's been disclosed this year. The ***FRIDAY***s had *shopping* in a *mall*, for heaven's sake. . . and ðsp's dirty little play concerns *plumbing*, its logo being crossed plungers. Your P&G noticed with the ***FRIDAY***s an undercurrent, not of revolt, but of discontent: Wasn't it perfectly obvious that Otherworlds were above such matters—or, if not *above*, at least *beyond* such annoying everydayness, such quotidian familiarity? Leave drains and gift certificates—so I detected—for the plodders, those who stay in the RW and find it good and sufficient.

And yet. Life has to be got through, even in High Thefarie. ðsp was there for more than half a century, and over such a stretch, high heroics are only occasionally in evidence. And, yes, shopping and plumbing do keep coming up. It's better when the plumbing doesn't come up, but it's part of life—of Otherlife in an Otherwhere. Most days, even Middle Earth, or Narnia, or OZ, or any other Imagination, are dull: Note how quickly Odysseus passes over time spent *on the boat*. And so I feel no shame, or whatever at asking you about items that you may think you'd go to High Thefarie to get away from, or pursuing, quite relentlessly, the steady spoor of details upon details in areasof experience that you don't care for at all. These IDs may drive you up the wall. . . but I don't really care. Not a jot. Nawww.

☛ In fact, my only concern is that you might spend too much time on the ensuing trivial pursuits. An hour should be more than enough. Count your blessings.

3: COLLECTIBLES...or rather KITSCH

Oi, such dreck! Or, if not exactly *dreck*, what a waste of time, and money, and space, and. . .

I refer, of course, to what people *keep* around. To the worthless, spacehogging *stuff* that litters the mantels, and sideboards, and breakfronts, and closets, and attics, and basements, and even *lawns* of this section of the RW—the *things*, utterly without value, that inhabitants of this our world cannot bring themselves to jettison, or, even worse, acquire, quite deliberately, simply to have around.

Milo's Venus with a timepiece in her tummy can stand for it all, I suppose. Or plaster mallards winging across the family room to the dining el. Or Barbies and Kens and GI Joes, carefully stashed to await heaven knows what day of reckoning. Or elves—which always look rather like gnomes—studding the front yard grass. Or. . . or. . . Misbegotten to start, and only grown worse with the inroads of time.

[It's worse now, of course. We have the Franklin Mint, and other Dreckmeisters of that ilk, who manufacture *collectibles*—things with no conceivable nature except *stashability*, possibly with the completely feckless rationalization that it—more than ticking Venus or Dwalin flaking paint—is a Good Investment. Onward and upward with QVC and baseball cards, printed for the occasion. . .]

A good phenomenon to flee, one might think, and one would be right. So right. So very right. Let us run away, O Best Beloved, refugees from *Kitsch*, and leave the dead hand of tastelessness behind. Far, far behind. And whither shall we run? To what blessed spot? Where can we get a life? In what happy land? . . .

Well, certainly NOT in High Thefarie One and all, the Thefariens were/are packrats of a stature hardly ever found in our RW. Beside them, we are the veriest pikers—except for ðsp, of course, who never let anything be thrown out, and found a plethora of acquisitive soulmates in that happy, happy, *stuffed* Kingdom.

They would, and did, keep anything. Their houses groaned—and, when their houses filled, they moved to others that offered them space for things and things and things. All of them. Even Eniaca, she the Omniversant, a Renaissance Woman in a place where there had been, and would be, no Renaissance—even she had a thing for carved insects, and windup χλçϖλcs, and antiqued lampstands, and obsidian puffballs, and autographed summonses, and. . . But why am I telling you all this? So that you will tell me, O Best Beloved, so that you will tell me.

Below, you will find listed the 12 (TWELVE) most favored, and most improbable, categories of collectibles/kitsch/trash—objects, etc., which the Thefariens acquired and kept till the Nick of Doom.[2] Choose 3 (THREE) of these classifications for your knowing treatment. For each:

[2] Which came, of course, at the end of XV/625.

1st, state what sort(s) of things the Category contained.
2nd, choose the most bizarre item collected in that Classification, and describe it thoroughly. Size, material, distinguishing characteristics, and use, if any.
3rd, give its provenience (i.e., tell where it came from) and cost in modores of Mog (the reigning currency in at the end of XV), and try to account for its popularity.
4th, in the case of 1 (ONE) of these, relate it to **ðsp**'s stay. Where and when and in what specific situation in High Thefarie did he encounter it? What was the result of that encounter?
5th, consider supplying sketches, however rough.

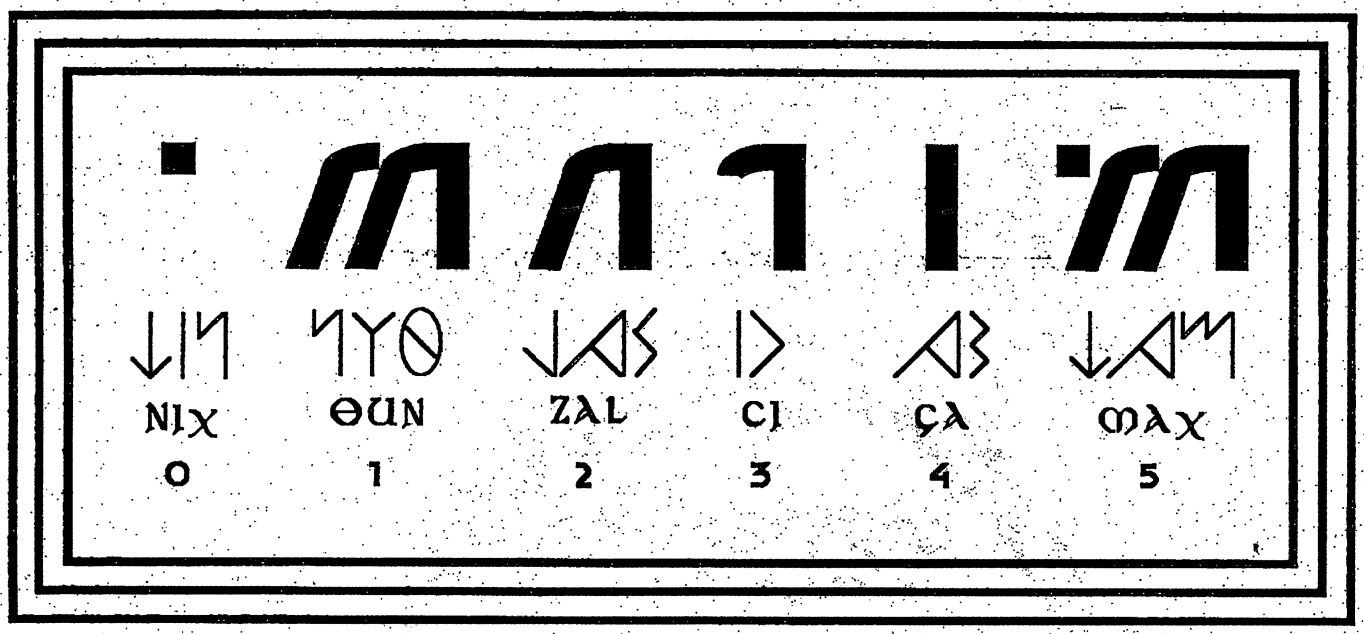
Please, oh please be merciful in your treatment of ðsp's, well, lack of perspicacity in this matter. Tasteless, he was; improvident, he was; greedy, he may well have been. But none of it was bad-hearted, he meant well, he was born that way—you know the bit. Besides, it's almost Christmas. Falalalalah, lalah lah lah, and all that.

1. Metal Fasteners
2. Buckles
3. Votive Candles
4. Tattoos *(s/c)*
5. Saddle Pommels
6. Parings
7. Leaves
8. Napkin Piercers
9. Axillary Jewels[3]
10. Orreries
11. People Dolls with Animal Faces
12. Containers

[3] One needed a pierced armpit for this. . . but there were many such.

Down for the Count
The Thefarien Quintal System

A: The Digits

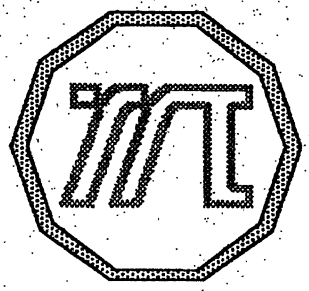


B: Handy Integers

M 1 1	Λ 2 2	1 3 3	I 4 4	˙M 10 5
MM 11 6	ΛM 12 7	1M 13 8	IM 14 9	˙Λ 20 10
MΛ 21 11	ΛΛ 22 12	1Λ 23 13	IΛ 24 14	˙1 30 15
M1 31 16	Λ1 32 17	11 33 18	I1 34 19	˙I 40 20

41 21	42 22	43 23	44 24	100 25
101 26	102 37	103 38	104 39	110 30
111 31	112 32	113 33	114 34	120 35
121 36	122 37	123 38	124 39	130 40
131 41	132 42	133 43	134 44	140 45
141 46	142 57	143 48	144 49	200 50
201 51	202 52	203 53	204 54	210 55
211 56	212 57	213 58	214 59	220 60
221 61	222 62	223 63	224 64	230 65
231 66	232 67	233 68	234 69	240 70
241 71	242 72	243 73	244 74	300 75
301 76	302 77	303 78	304 79	310 80
311 81	312 82	313 83	314 84	320 85

321 86	322 87	323 88	324 89	330 90
331 91	332 92	333 93	334 94	340 95
341 96	342 97	343 98	344 99	400 100
401 101	402 102	403 103	404 104	410 105
411 106	412 107	413 108	414 109	420 110
421 111	422 112	423 113	424 114	430 115
431 116	432 117	433 118	434 119	440 120
441 121	442 122	443 123	444 124	1000 125
	2000 250	3000 375	4000 500	10000 625
				100000 3125



from the

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT
on the Terminal Praxis, 1994

Down To The Wire.

One of those expressions whose derivation seems fairly obvious. Racing, the Sport of Kings, and all that. The thundering bunch of bangtails careening madly down the stretch, the outcome in doubt until, well, until the very very last possible Instant. Exciting. The true stuff of Spectatorism, pumping the blood, speeding the breath, hoarsing[1] the voice. And then the Instant comes, and the cluster of quadrupeds moils madly at the , and that wonder: Did Mine Win?

But: Did you ever wonder, Why Wire? I mean, why not *String*? Why not *Tape*? Why not *Thread*? A horse at full tilt slamming into a Wire? A Wire, fixed and taut? Somebody might get *hurt*. Garrotted, maybe. Or Decapitated. Or even...

Tell me about it.

The Preceptor and Guide who hands this item to you this morning, 8 December 1994, is hardly a whole man. Oh, I know he *looks* to be alive, full of pith and ginger, a fellow of infinite jest, in complete possession of all faculties and body parts, but, in reality, *he is scarred.*

He has seen the Wire , and it works. Somewhere, out there on the track, he left his head, and CΛΘ knows what else. He cut it very close this year, and it reciprocated, and cut him very close, and...

What's he wearing for a head? Amazing what they can do these days with a little plastic, a little papier maché.

In point of fact, it is legitimate matter for debate as to whether he is here at all. He doesn't, somehow, *feel* here. Mayhap—good word, that—mayhap he is still lying there, back at the track, cut off [and down, and across, and through] in the very moment of achievement. That he was, and is

Down At The Wire.

Then what's up at the front of the class? A triumph of inertia, tradition, habit. Persistence pays. But I digress...

NOTICE!!!

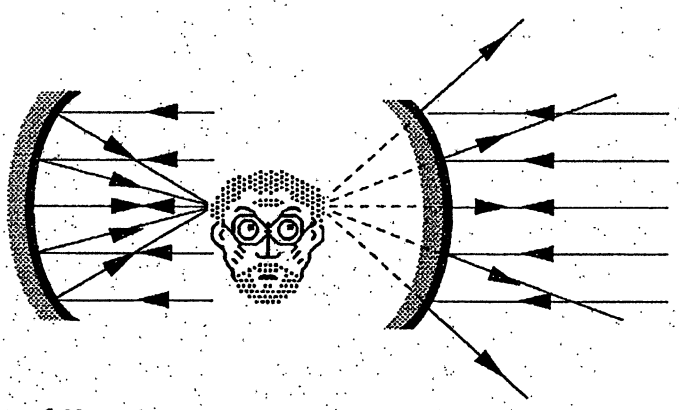
Ever solicitous of your welfare, Your Preceptor & Guide herewith pronounces officially, in class, the Eff-Cee, or Fatal Commitment. The Long Questions, at least, in this year's **Terminal Praxis** will concern one very confusing item:

A Mirror Child:
Reflection, Refraction, Diffraction, Distortion, and
Fragmentation in **high Thefarie,**
with Particular Attention
to the Gardens of
BAROK
year 614 and after,
but with constant cross-referencing.
Prime source: HT 31, with particular attention
to p. 57 and p. 59. Since p. 57 and p. 59 are, at the moment,
blank, this poses rather a problem.

Rather inaccurate, as it turns out. But close enough to start.

1 There is a verb *to hoarsen*, but it would spoil the rhythm. So here behold, for the first and last time, the present participle of *to hoarse*. No, don't thank me. The question, as Humpty Dumpty said, is who's to be master, that's all.

And off we go...



Was it all done with mirrors? *Not quite.*

Was it all *un*done with mirrors? *Pretty near.*

I refer, of course, to ∂sp's disastrous construction, *The Gardens of* BAROK, which nearly brought down high Thefarie twice: first, there was the early invasion by the Snollygosters in 614, saved only by Leftwich's glorious Leap at the Battle of Horizon Ridge; then, nine years later, its delayed repercussion in The *Profusion of Images* of 623, which brought down such government as remained and left a vacuum for the Class Struggle of 624. In the event, things *did* Turn Out All Right, and High Thefarie *did* move on to XVI, but for a while it was touch and go.

Or, rather, impinge and reflect.

He was, frankly, much too concerned with *image*, was ∂sp. The world's, ceaselessly caught and twisted in strangely silvered glass. His own, tirelessly checked and furbished in any bright surface. A slave to *appearances*, that's what he was. And he almost enslaved that world. For good...or rather for bad.

And mirrors, O Best Beloved, mirrors and their effects, in the winding-down of Cycle XV, will supply the Long Questions for this year's TERMINAL PRAXIS. Your Preceptor & Guide will endeavor, as always, to supply a sufficient *variety* in the Six Questions to allow you to demonstrate your knowledge to its best advantage, but all of the Six will deal in some fundamental way with mirrors and/or their equivalents, and all of the Six will stem from BAROK or its consequences, primarily but not exclusively the Battle of Horizon Ledge, the Concord of Lake Seemly, the *Profusion of Images*, and the Breaking of the Concord.

Therefore, in the dwindling days that remain, let me exhort you, first, to:

think MIRROR!

And, while you're thinking, to brighten your absolutely total recall of high Θefarie with ceaseless perusal of Θefarien Materials [hereinafter abbreviated ΘM], with concentration on BAROK and after. I excerpt some passages of particular interest:

from Tentative Chronology 8.0

614: [59] ☞ Spring$_1$: Gardens of Barok open; Establishment immobilized (HT 31)

<u>∂sp's *Fourth Public*</u> DISGRACE

Libration$_1$: DSP lasts one day as *Sutrela* (dragon-sexer); in recovery at Rosehaven until Fall$_2$ (HT 39)

•Fall$_2$: Mt. Punctilious erupts, engendering the• *Rift in the Succession*

☞ Snollygosters at Horizon Ledge (HT 31)

Repulse of Snollygosters by (Morris) Leftwich's Leap

☞ ∂sp's late arrival at battle of **Horizon**

Concord of Lake Seemly

623: [68] Spring$_1$: ∂sp incarcerated for 25 days beneath waves at Ywis (HT 42.3)

☞ *Profusion of Images* (HT 16); Concord of Lake Seemly broken

from HT 16, p. 23
[the *Apocalypse* of TARXI 25.16-19[2]]

16. And a great sign appeared in the South, as of two mirrors, *one in a* frame of gilt, and *one in a* frame of deal. 17. And *these* did endlessly reflect each the other, emptiness of all emptinesses, world without end. 18. And the one is called, *Love*, which *is* to say, *Bagatelle*, 19. and the other is called, *Hate*, which *is* to say, *Entelechy*.

from HT 31, p. 60
[the *Transfigurational Vista* of the Gardens of BAROK]
[emphasis added]

which, cunningly conceived to ferry the spiritually cleansed viewer in a self-steering boat across a wide, unruffled mere to a flowered isle topped by a neat but tasteless castlet which, upon entry, proved to be much larger and infinitely more opulent inside than out, where, gazing into the wavering surface of a curiously framed mirror, he would behold himself at once arrived in the richness of the place and at the same time unconfined, roaming by the still waters and green pastures through which he had so lately passed, whereupon he would raise a richly wrought cup for the draught that cheers, went, due to partial power failure and some industrial sabotage in the formulation of the enabling spells and charms, completely, if you except the fact that there was after all a boat, wrong, with the result that the mere drained, exposing the track and cogs and rendering the ride exceedingly bumpy, the dock on the isle could only be reached by an arduous hand-over-hand climb from the prematurely beached boat, the lilies had wilted over the path, the mockup castlet displayed advanced symptoms of woodrot, the interior opulence sprouted disgusting blue fungus, and the mirror, working only sporadically, displayed the viewer in the midst of a mindlessly carnal contretemps in the stews of downtown Clus, while the draught, in which the three game remaining beholders of that first/last day indulged, induced, not cleansing and rededication, but the cathartic nausea and catatonia attendant upon participation in what it were not exaggeration to term the Acme of Quintessential Disaster. . . .

from HT 35, p. 70

You were there, at...*The Profusion of Images* which swept away *The Concord of Lake Seemly*.
You were watching, closely, when Mt. Punctilious erupted early and forced *The Rift in the Succession*...
[You were watching, closely,] when ƀsp's creation of *The Gardens of* BAROK came close, all too close, to *Breaking the Pattern*.

from HT 15, p. 22
["Epiphanic Monostichs"]

Overheard at Horizon Ledge:
"My mother loathed using the telescope here."

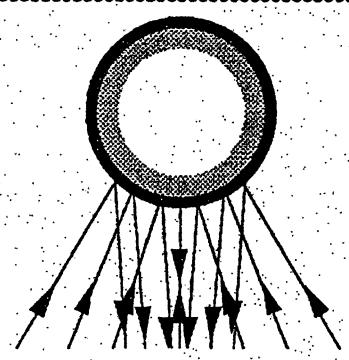
from HT 19, p. 26
["Friends and Wellwishers"]

Leftwich, Morris	The Crypt, Horizon Ledge	so little left of a hero after the disbarment

2. The numbering is wrong, of course. There was—sigh—a typo. The correct numeration would be 17-20, but why mess things up more than they are?

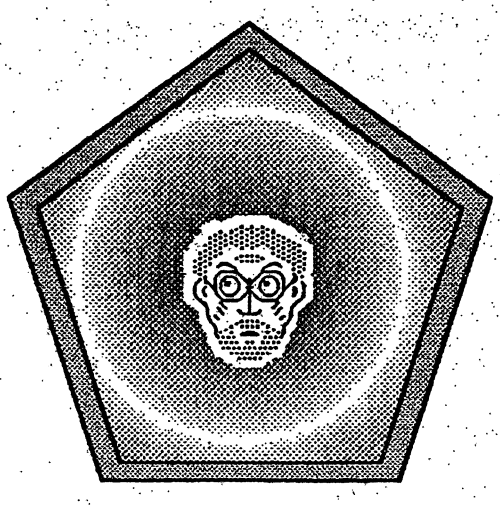
let me call your attention also to
HT 62, pp. 169-170
[the maps of the so-called "Primal Lands" which include BAROK]

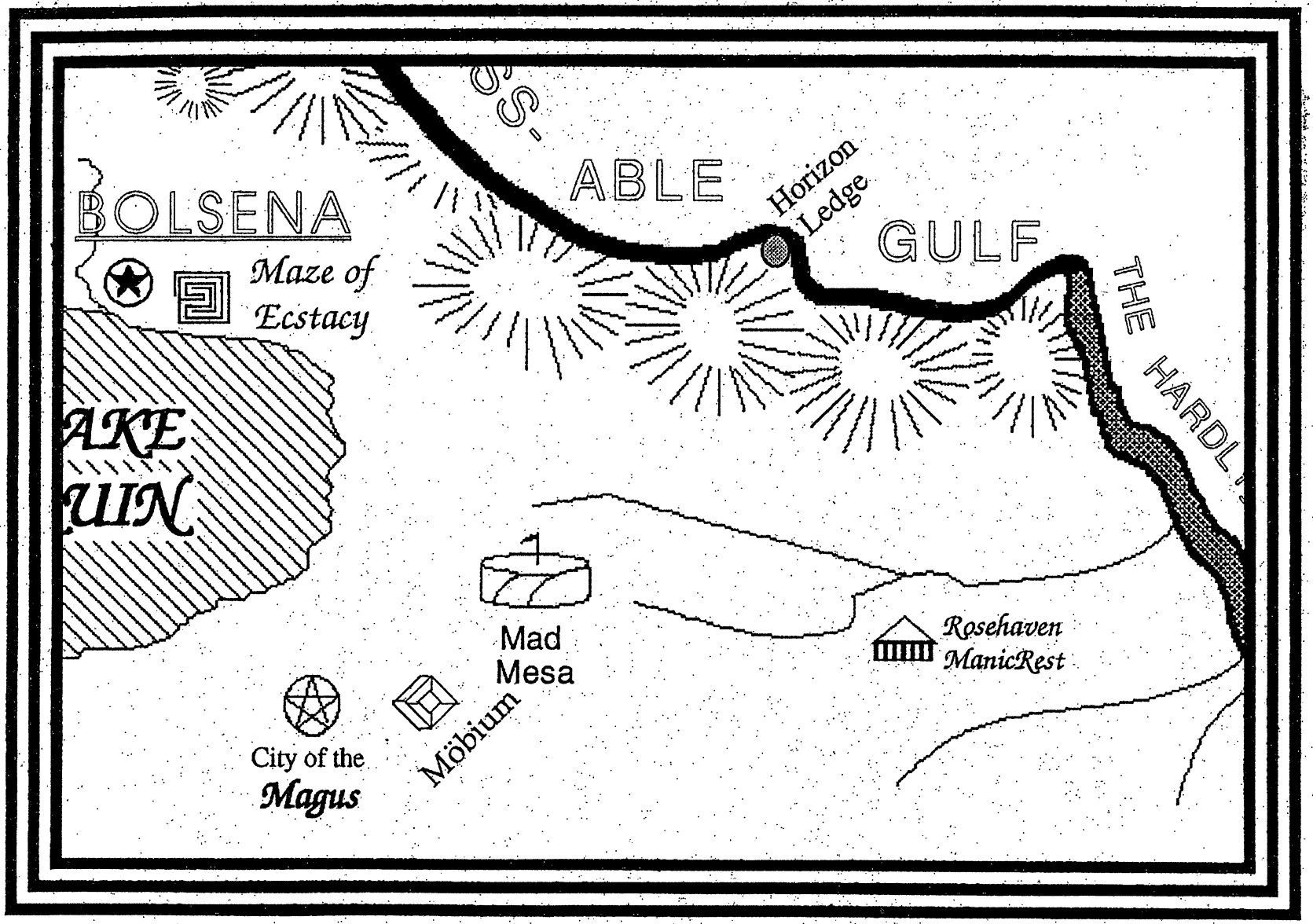
let me call your attention also to
the final page of this handout
[the map of Horizon Ledge and Environs]



Armed with these memory aids, ⊖efarien Materials, the MAP, and, above all, your staggering knowledge, you should be able to answer, at length, any of the six Long Questions, which will deal with such elementary items about the mirrors as:

Late-Life Crisis: The Narcissist & The Girl from the Pool ["But She's a Mirror Child"]
Refletion: Virtual Image, or, The Search for a Focus
Refraction: Eirapeo—The Land Behind the Mirror
Diffraction: The *Profusion of Images*, or, A Prophecy Realized
Distortion: Unstable Fate of a "Theme Park"
Fragmentation: The Shattering of the Mirror—Leftwich On and Off the Ledge





Horizon Ledge and Environs

Identification Lists from the Terminal Praxis, 1994

1: GODS

Gods? Oi, did they have *Gods*! It was a jammed pantheon, that accumulation of Goddesses, Gods, Godlettes, Godlets, and Godlings to whom the Thefariens, venerators all, cubitoflected.[1] The crowded precincts of Enna, each for a different divinity, that are mapped on the Fegatonian Grid [Θ.M, p. 40] give only the barest idea of the real mob of squabbling supernaturals who oversaw, quite fragmentarily, the destiny of High Θefarie. There was, it seemed a God for *everything*, not just the important things—you know, Sun, Moon, War, Weather, Marriage, Wisdom. No, no; that was where High Θefarie *started*. After that, the deluge, a flood of Gods for every jejeune jot, every tiny tittle of existence. Gods of rivers, Gods of streams, Gods of pools. Gods of armaments, Gods of tools, Gods of kitchen utensils. Gods of travel, Gods of roads, Gods of specific alleys. Gods of knowledge, Gods of writing, even a God of the letter Θ. It required special functionaries [λ]S] Τe] just to keep the GodLists in some sort of order. For the nonThefarien, knowing God, any God, was a real problem.

Not that δsp—that monster of impiety—found it such. True to his superficial nature, his chronicles treat only the big-ticket items, the *obvious* Gods, especially the sun-Goddess CλΘ. Rather than present Thefarien religious experience in the full sweep of its massed and choppy nature, he even imported one God of his own, minimus, God of Small Favors—who was probably a joke, anyway. Beyond that, *nada*.[2] Were it up to δsp, the study of Thefarien theology in Texas would show nothing more than an Utter and Absolute Blank.

Happily, it is *not* up to δsp. Because there is You...or there *are* You...or, anyway, there You are. Steeped in lore, legend, myth, and ritual as you are, it will be but the work of a minute—or at most, one half-hour—for you to set at least part of the record straight.

Which you are now to do, thus:

> Below are listed 12 [TWELVE] of the myriad Thefarien Gods. Greatest, least, betweenest, and all other gradations. Each is accompanied by a standard epithet—which may be unobvius, inaccurate, or wrong, of course. Choose 3 [THREE] for your knowing treatment. In each case, answer the following questions:
>
> 1st: What is it God/Goddess/Divinity *of*?
> 2nd: What does it look like—or, better, what is its distinctive appearance?
> 3rd: How does it oversee its specific area of power/expertise/concern?
> 4th: Where in High Thefarie is it usually to be found?
> 5th: What is the meaning of the epithet?
> 6th: How does one worship it, or at least acknowledge its existence?
>
> ☛ For at least ONE [1] of these Gods, account for δsp's curious silence concerning it by relating, very briefly, the occasion on which he encountered it.
> Any other information you can supply for a given God will be quite welcome—but cannot, given the brief time at your disposal, be required.
> At least one of the Gods chosen should be, by our RW standards, fairly important.

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[1] "cubitoflected"—i.e., "bent the elbow," the Thefarien posture of devotion analogous to RW European *genuflection*. But this standard religious maneuver, indulged in every Fiveday by the faithful, also involved physical inversion, contortion, and utter abasement, and is really much better left to the imagination.

[2] Not to be confused with NλδΛ, the Thefarien Goddess of Picnics, resident of the strange atoll near Brummagem.

1. CULÇÀNÇ the two-faced
2. NC the unpronounceable
3. FUFLUNS the damp
4. SELVÀ the rustling
5. FRIPÀ the chilly
6. MUÇI the ineradicable
7. LÀSXR the magnanimous
8. CVL ÀLP the nutritious
9. TÇITLN the nasty
10. ÀÇLÀX the unsmelled
11. KÀ-KRUΘ the implacable
12. ÀÇIRÀ the avenger

2: DISEASES

You will have gathered, in the course of this course, that standard RW accounts of Otherworlds give the quotidian short shrift—or, to put it another way, that they neglect the usual, everyday occupations, employments, necessities, and pastimes that constitute much the greater part of existence, in whatever locale. I mean, high heroics are all very fine, but you can't make a life out of them. You can save a world on Thursday or on Threeday, but you still will have to eat, sleep, and interact the following Friday or Fourday, and affirm the essential dullness of life.

In mere literature, most literary heroes or heroines miss this; they move on to save the next world. But ðsp's Thefarien sojourn lasted more than 50 years, and thousands of his days were utterly without noteworthiness—except for their complete *otherness*. The least business of life in high Θefarie involved him with/in items and actions completely at variance with his acculturation in basic vanilla midAmerica. But he had half a century to do not much more than Hang Around. And so, he became, insofar as he could, just another Thefarien. He worked, he played, he familied.

And he sickened.

Oh, he wasn't sick terribly often. An average amount, let's say. Over his entire span, perhaps a pent or a pair of pents a year; high Θefarie was not a hypochondriacal culture. And only once was he in real danger from illness. But it is important to realize that his diseases, trivial and serious, were all *Thefarien* diseases, not RW diseases. Alien he was, but he evidently brought no microbes along.[3]

It is probably worth reflecting at this point that disease, though basically a biochemical phenomenon, is a cultural construct as well. The sheer scientific description of an imbalance in one's system is only part of the nosographic picture; the rest is supplied by consideration of what culture and society choose to consider as disease. For the most part, even in our enlightened RW, we can become ill only within acceptable parameters.[4] *Anorexia nervosa*, for example, occurred at least as far back as the Middle Ages, but it did not become a *disease* until quite recently.

Let me make two further observations: [1] A given culture varies in its attitudes towards various diseases: *Housemaid's knee* [as it used to be known] is rather ridiculous, even mildly shameful; *cancer* veerges on the unspeakable; AIDS calls into play a number of reactions, none of them at all pleasant. [2] In spite of the foregoing point, we can make generalizations *between* cultures: ours tends, overall, to regard most diseases as afflications imposed from outside and hence deserving of compassion—but the sick, in other cultures, are often regarded as *criminals*.[5] high Θefarie, however, took a different tack: with few exceptions, diseases were regarded as *funny*, jokes imposed almost at whim by one or another member of an unpredictable divine pantheon. The proper reply to the announcement of sickness thus ranged from a snorting chuckle to a grand guffaw, and a successful medic's bedside manner partook of hysterical laughter.

Anyway, ðsp was sick a number of times, always with purely Thefarien complaints, which reduced his already reduced functioning. They were *different* from RW sicknesses; from our perspective, even the most minor of them verged on the positively bizarre. And the oddness was extended by the very curious nature of Thefarien medical practice: In all cases, the cure was worse than the disease. Quite a bit worse, given that, with one exception, all of ðsp's afflictions were minor.

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[3] This may seem odd—until due attention is paid to the fact that he was not really so much *transported* to high Θefarie as *reconstituted* there.

[4] Your P&G protests that he is not being capriciously paradoxical here. The point, when well qualified, is quite a sound one, and has been supported and advanced by theorists infinitely more capable and learned than he.

[5] This attitude is not unknown to us—else we would not give the verb *malinger* nearly so much employment—but it is happily no longer common.

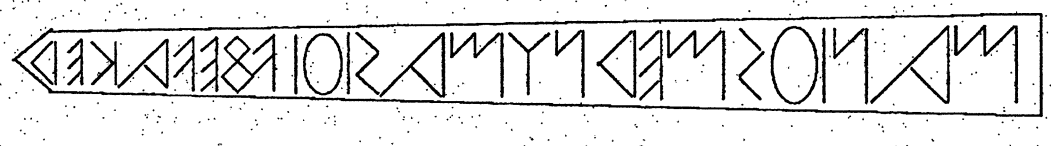
Below you will find listed the common names of 12 (TWELVE) frequent Thefarien illnesses/diseases/afflictions/infections, suffered by ȣsp during his stay. Choose 3 (THREE) for your knowing treatment. In each case, give:

1st, a more or less scientific description of the ailment
2nd, the symptoms
3rd, the standard prescribed treatment
4th, the ultimate effect on the sufferer (ȣsp)

☛ NB: ONE (1) of your three choices should be the single really dangerous disease suffered by ȣsp. Your account of this one should be specific as to the date and place, and should also present briefly its immediate effect on his life.

Let me ask that you be merciful in your treatment of ȣsp*'s* pains, *and not regard his sufferings in the Thefarien fashion, as mere materials for low jests and high hohos. I mean, it's Christmas. Falalalalah, lalah lah lah, and all that.*

1. Parkly Heat
2. Gaiter
3. Sorry Aces
4. Fartogo
5. Parry Parry
6. Happy Tutus
7. Cowlick
8. Muzzles
9. Numps
10. Clup
11. Moano
12. Squish



[Archaic Thefarien Tongue Depressor]

LONG QUESTIONS
from the Terminal Praxis, 1994

Mirrors

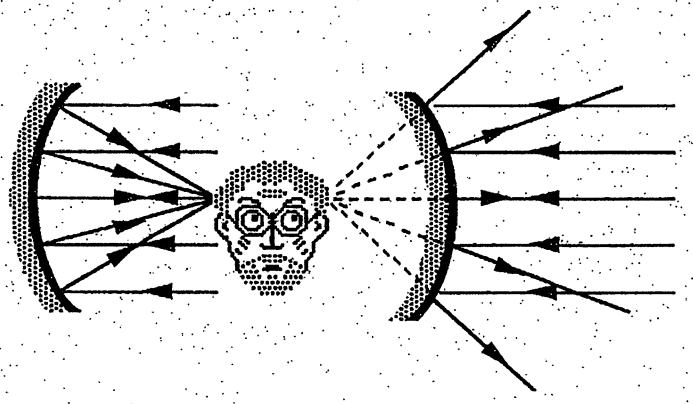
—plus, of course, attendant attractions and distractions at the Gardens [*sic*] of BAROK, Horizon Ledge, and other related spots

First, however, consider the beginning of the Long Questioun #1 from last year's Terminal Praxis [Monday]:

> Drama, of course, holds the mirror up to nature. But what sort of a mirror? Does the image come back reversed, as in our usual mirrors, where mirroree waggles a right hand, and mirrorer flaps a left in return? Or does it flip the image over, so that right waves back at right? And is the image accurate? Same size, allowing for distance? Or does the mirror compress the original, or stretch it out, or knock off the corners, or oscillate straight edges into sine waves, or reflect a reflection of a reflection? Or. . .

There was no thought of doing *mirrors* then. Creepy, isn't it?

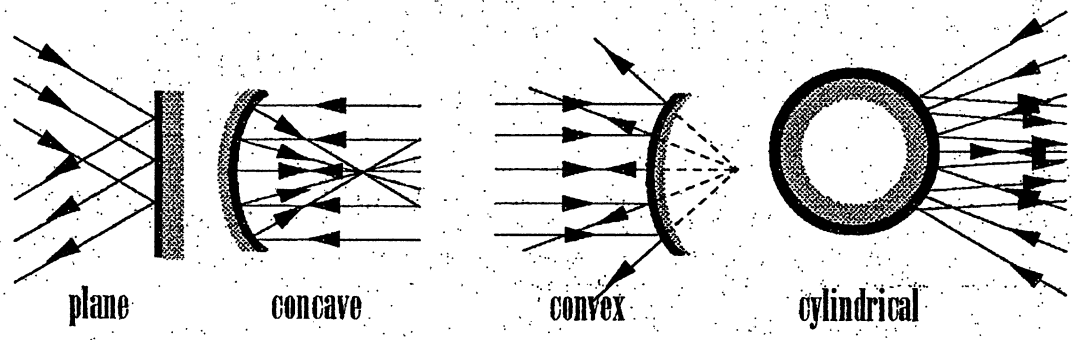
I. Osp, of course, was *never* in position. For anything. And especially not for mirrors. Consider this:



This position, wherein he occupies the focal point of two mirrors at once, is dangerous in the extreme. Reflected in the concave mirror on our left, which flips his image over, left to right, he has somehow contrived to do this *inside* the convex mirror on our right. This is flatly impossible. If it *were* possible, it would turn him inside out, or splatter him all over the wall to the right, or change his color and sex in highly drastic ways. Instead, it seems merely to have left him with a bad headache and a speaking knowledge of Spanish. But if this cavalier disregard of the properties of RW mirrors was fraught with peril, how much more so the fey enchanted mirrors of an OtherWorld like high Oefarie. The PentaPental mirror? What would that have done to him? And the psychotropic propensities of the StarStart Reflector—he would have been left a babbling idiot.

But you know this. You've read the book: *There and Nearly Back Again: A Treatise on Magic Mirrors*, his D. Mag. thesis with which he failed the Magus diploma course in the City of the Magus in 602. Lost now, of course, that priceless document..but no real harm done. *You* remember it. And so enlighten the rest of the world:

> Summarize a good section of ϑsp's thesis on Magic Mirrors, not just that part dealing with the possible vanilla RW mirrors we all know:



> No, move beyond this. Present at least THREE (3) truly enchanted reflectors. Diagram each, and discuss employment and effect. In the case of ONE (1), treat ϑsp's inevitably maladroit use of it during his stay in high Θefarie.

II. Everything, of course, is relevant. Consider the following quotation:

> First, there's the room you can see through the glass – that's just the same as our drawing room, only the things go the other way...How would you like to live in Looking-glass House, Kitty? I wonder if they'd give you milk in there? Perhaps Looking-glass milk isn't good to drink – but oh, Kitty! now we come to the passage. You can just see a little peep of the passage in Looking-glass House, if you leave the door of our drawing-room wide open: and it's very like our passage as far as you can see, only you know it may be quite different on beyond. Oh, Kitty! how nice it would be if we could only get through into Looking-glass House! I'm sure it's got, oh! such beautiful things in it! (*Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There*, Chap. 1)

Not merely a bit from a 19th-century children's story, but a clue, a veritable clue, to our OtherWhere's *Other*OtherWhere. The land behind the mirror, just around in beyond the frame. The one that lurks there. Not that Alice was right, of course: "...just the same as our drawing room, only things go the other way." What nonsense! But she found out soon enough...and that was from a mere RW mirror.

But in a Thefarien mirror, the observer, that happy heisenberg, peered inevitably at the tantalizing traces of ЄIRΛFЄΘ—only metaphorically a reversed high Thefarie. Wonders upon wonders, of course—or were they? What is the *opposite* of high Θefarie? Cockaigne? Cleveland, perhaps? Jasper TX, pearl of the Big Thicket? Certainly not. Is the world, our world, the shaky RW any readier for the facts than high Θefarie was for the Appendix to ϑsp's thesis? Well, maybe not, but it's a thing you know, O Best Beloved.

> Ready or not, give a brief introduction to ЄIRΛFЄΘ, the mirror-world, or antiworld, to high Thefarie. Recall the strategy you employed in your *Esemplastic Telos*—encyclopedic overview followed by detailed sampling(s); it may work here. Though time may be of the essence in this matter. But the RW will be grateful for whatever you can do. I might observe that the area around Enphuril, possessing as it does a detailed map on e.M. p. 149, might be as good an area as any to center upon, but that is merely a suggestion.

III. Others, of course, have wondered at the thoroughness of the debacle of BAROK. Not that ƀsp should have been expected to produce anything flawless, but he had been trained in a hard school, and had won his world-building diploma—admittedly, after a court battle, but won it nevertheless, and must after all have known *something* about what he was doing. How could he possibly haved placed such a gaudy structure on a geological anomaly? His usual attention to the details of the required survey would have given him a clear signal that nothing, not even an outhouse, could be located at that spot without the risk of unleashing long-pent forces to the severe detriment of any possible occupant.

But attention, usual or otherwise, was not what ƀsp was about to give. Remember, he was in his high fifties when planning BAROK, and worried about the incursions of age. Given his looks, he could hardly be accused of vanity, but he would spend long intervals inspecting himself in all possible reflecting surfaces. Had he lost any hair since the last time he looked? Were his ears wrinkled? How to stave off the relentless inroads of Time? That sort of thing. Which rendered him helpless on that bi-moonlit evening after a hard rain, when the pool answered back, and he beheld, in all her shimmery glory just behind the water's surface, the nymph ÇUIOTIN, whom he anglicized, or rather anglofrancized, as Joy Matin. And the Gardens retreated to a hidden, rarely visited corner of his mind. Unfortunately, it was a wet Fall$_2$, and he got no work done for three pentpents.

Trace the necessarily platonic relationship—or was it?—between ƀsp and Joy Matin, the girl from the pool through its various stages, and show how it contributed to the disaster at BAROK. Be as specific as you can under the circumstances, about the weather, the garden plans, the complaints, and the inevitable dissolution of the affair.

IV. Disasters, of course, were ƀsp's unwitting specialty. There were many times when ſſſß—The Powers That Be; you *can't* have forgotten *them*—sorely regretted the quirk in the universe that had forced them to bring him on as SAUÇANT, or Savior, so early. Certainly, he did precious little saving for his first half-century, but rather seemed almost devoted to bringing down, not just the government, but the whole damned *Place*. The constant DISGRACEs, the architectural sabotage, the Awful Clambake, the War Between Men & Women—all these put High Θefarie in extreme jeopardy, and there were many more catastrophes to be laid to his spotted account. Still, the consensus among ſſſß, when they gloomily compared notes long afterward, was that BAROK was absolutely his worst, most dangerous accomplishment. Not only did it render the country completely vulnerable to the depradations of the Snollygosters at Horizon Ledge, but it spawned a spinoff that very nearly annihilated High Θefarie and left not an atom behind. I refer, of course, to the *mise*, or ΘeΘe—that is to say, the concretization of the *Pattern* of *Thefarieness* (so to speak), upon whose safety the continued existence of High Θefarie depended, which had been hidden away beneath the floor of Lake Seemly.[1] Another quote might be apposite. Okay, the *mise* was very like the mirror attributed to Merlin by Spenser in *The Færye Queene*, 3.2.19:

> It vertue had, to shew in perfect sight,
> What euer thing was in the world contaynd,
> Betwixt the lowest earth and heauens hight,
> So that it to the looker appertaynd;
> What euer foe had wrought, or frend had faynd,
> Therein discouered was, ne ought mote pas,
> Ne ought in secret from the same remaynd;
> For thy it round and hollow shaped was,
> Like to the world it selfe, and seem'd a world of glas.

Not a prophetic mirror, perhaps. But it was spherical and hollow, and replicated, or better *pre*plicated, High Θefarie in every twist, turn, and least element, holding a world's fate on its face. And, when the debacle occurred at BAROK, and a good deal of the lake drained into the bowels of the beleaguered garden, the rush loosened it, and up it bobbed to the surface and began to *weather*.

[1] This may remind Zelaznyites of Amber. Pure coincidence.

And so it was, a scant nine years later, that the silvering flaked off, the images flew away, and the 25th Chapter of *The Apocalypse of* TARXI was fulfilled...almost, but not quite.
But it was a near thing, and all thanks, or better *due*, to DSP.

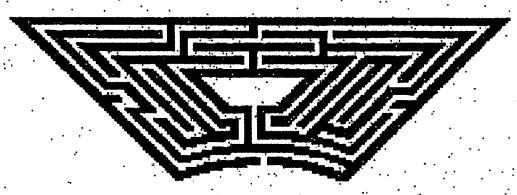
> Trace the stages in the *Profusion of Images* of 623, the near Utter End, at Lake Seemly, of all of high Thefarie. Show how the prophetic language of *The Apocalypse of* TARXI was factually inaccurate, but on the mark *poetically*, let's say. If you are an enviromentalist, treat the damage to the bioshpere and, in particular, to Lake Seemly itself. In any case, show how the Concord of Lake Seemly was broken. [While you're at it, you might tell what the Concord *was*.] Finally, what, or rather, *Who* brought the disaster to an end and saved the world?

V. Morris Leftwich, of course, was known to every Thefarien for the last decade of XV. *Leftwich's Leap*, which had so frustrated the Snollygosters at Horizon Ledge in $Spring_1$, 614,[2] was in its way the peak of Thefarien heroics, one of those prospectively futile instances of desperate improvisation that just happen to work out, and was celebrated far and wide. All contemporary accounts, however, avoid the really important questions,with their implications: First,*what was Leftwich doing at Horizon Ledge in the first place?* To recall it to you: He was, quite simply, in Relegation, the equivalent of Exile, following his disbarment, which came, of course, as a result of his serving as DSP's counsel in the court proceedings attendant upon the latter's second DISGRACE, Second Divorce, and the disgusting Heramve pamphlet. Second, *what, precisely, did Leftwich do when he Leapt, and Why?* Saving a nation seems an odd occupation for a disbarred lawyer reduced to a miserable existence in a crypt on the periphery.

> Present, in all its glory, *Leftwich's Leap*. From Horizon Ledge, over the Gulf, down to the outlands below. How did he do it, why did he do it, and how and why did it work? Why did the Snollygosters retreat in confusion. Snollygosters are, very large and very speedy—and very stupid. Take that into account in giving your theory.A diagram, or even a series of diagrams, may help your presentation immeasurably.

VI. BAROK, of course, was an utter washout as a Thefarien analogue to a Theme Park, or indeed as anything else.[3] Surpisingly, it spawned imitations, of which the most banal, inept, and puerile was the *Minor Reservation*, erected near Horizon Ledge, of all places, in 617. Quite out-of-the-way, and devoted to a very lesser god, it somehow attracted enough clientele to keep it going until the Cycle ended with 625. Like BAROK, it was all done with mirrors.

> Present the *Minor Reservation* for all to see. Diagram it, trace the path of a normal visitor, and decribe its exhibits and entertainments. Account, if you can, for its popularity. Remember, it was based on this pattern:



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[2] Let me here indicate that the Tentative Chronology for that year is confused, or rather flat wrong. It should run this way:
614: [59] $Spring_1$: Gardens of Barok open; Establishment immobilized (HT 31)
Snollygosters at Horizon Ledge (HT 31)
Initial repulse of Snollygosters by (Morris) Leftwich's Leap
DSP's *Fourth Public* DISGRACE
$Libration_1$: DSP lasts one day as *Sutrela* (dragon-sexer); in recovery at Rosehaven until $Fall_2$ (HT 39)
•$Fall_2$: Mt. Punctilious erupts, engendering the• *Rift in the Succession*
DSP's late arrival at battle of Horizon
Concord of Lake Seemly

[3] This will be made clear by the missing graphics on p. 57 and p. 59, when they appear in Version 9.0. (*They did.* [added 2003])

THEFARIOLOGY: The First Beginnings

There has recently swum into ðsp 's ken...well, not exactly *swum*; it was in a box of stuff he'd forgotten about. A box of undoubted antiquity, which had been under other boxes...But anyway, what a document! The only surviving copy of the Parageography Final from the course's first presentation more than two decades ago, in Fall, 1973. The discovery provided him with a number of surprises. For example, he had thought, latterly, that High Thefarie had not made its appearance before 1974. But Recollection must have already been in full swing that long-ago December. ðsp herewith reprints that *Examination* [this was a time before nomenclature had run wild, before *Terminal Praxis* and *Esemplastic Telos* had made their first sallies at legitimation-by-jargon], adding annotation to try to decipher the process.

The following few sorry objects constitute the sum total of our preserved knowledge of High Thefarie ("Thuta Thefarie" in the curious language of its inhabitants); there have been, of course, others. But the two anomalous copies of the Encyclopedia Britannica, Eleventh Edition[1]—the one with a highly suggestive entry under "Boar" and the curious chart of the tides in the Bubastic Sea, the other with the startling (but, alas, unpreserved) tale of the rape of the maiden Eniaca and its disastrous consequences—perished utterly in the Sack of Nanking by the Japanese 35 years ago, and their last living witness, Elmo Utterly,[2] departed this life quite peacefully but completely mutely in Waco last February 14, admitting to the age of 115, but to nothing else. Science stands aghast and still before such a loss...though it must be admitted that Utterly evidently felt no such loss, tipping the wink to Baylor coeds, with sometimes startling results, until three weeks before his death, and providing Waco with a spice to its life it had not known since the days of Brann the Iconoclast. "Seen it all before," he would cackle as he shuffled off to his furnished room, never loosing his grip.

But I digress. The fact remains that Utterly has been gathered to his fathers, and only these scraps of time's offal are left to tell the tale of High Thefarie, which once did, and may still do, battle with Tlön, Uqbar, and Orbis Tertius in another time and another space. Only these scraps—and you.

For you, O best beloved, are the sole surviving expert,[3] in this continuum, on High Thefarie, possessed of a knowledge that utterly overwhelms Elmo Utterly's. To you, the following bits and pieces are as familiar as your knuckles, and the merest sight of any one of them, even the all but illegible map attributed to Pietro di Donato (1596?-1643?)[4] is enough to recall to you the sweep and surge of High Thefarien history, from first-beginnings to all but inevitable end. You can translate the Viguvinian Tablets[5] as easily as you read a newspaper; the Tusked Graffito[6] is child's play to you.

You will therefore make use of any or all of the following exhibits, and relate to your humble preceptor the full and complete details of any two[7] of the following subjects, calling your knowledge (for that is what it is, is it not, o best beloved?) of High Thefarie in particular, and of Moral Space[8] in general, into full play:

1) The Rape of Eniaca, and What Followed
2) The Rise and Fall of the Sons of the Boar
3) The Horse of A Different Choler
4) The Balance-of-Trade Crisis of 3042-43[9]

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[1] The process is, of course, a direct steal from Borges' approach in "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius"—though do note that ðsp acknowledges the debt by the citation below.

[2] At this remove certainty is difficult, but ðsp would venture considerable on the hypothesis that there never *was* such a person as Elmo Utterly, the Waco derelict. A straw man, especially an *unreliable* straw man, is always an attractive gambit for bringing non-standard information before a cynical public. One can always back away from direct, sullying association with The Facts.

[3] The other necessary ploy—the supposition of the omniscient examinee—was, surprisingly, already at work at the Beginning of Things.

[4] Whence this individual? Invented or real? ðsp is mystified.

[5] See the standard Thefarien text that accompanies the Long Questions on every Terminal Praxis, as on pp. 70-71 above.

[6] See "Cave Wall" in HT 4, p. 5 above.

[7] *Two?* ðsp was a real despot in those days. Of course, there were no ID questions on the '73 exam.

[8] ðsp is still no nearer a satisfactory definition of this will-of-the-wisp that he was 21 years ago.

[9] Did he realize that the numeration was quintal? If so, why not convert the numbers?

5) The Reduction of the Bubastic Archipelago, 4111-14
6) Of Avizha, the Halfling with the Taste for Wine, and his Triumphant Death at the Sack of Wongillion (Ronciglione?)
7) The Sinking of Kestroy (Castro?) and the Wasting of Bridgton (Bracciano?)
8) A Day in the Life: Growing Up in High Thefarie Before the Terror
9) Utterly's Smile: The Demiurge Departs

Wait; there's more. The Examination from 1974 has surfaced as well. ðsp was evidently in a hurry; he used the text—not the questions—of the previous year's examination, framing it as indicated below:

17 December 1974

One year ago tomorrow, a monstrous deceit was perpetrated upon certain students of this University: They took an examination which purported to come from the hand of one D. S. Parker, Professor of Classics...when actually Parker had been dead for over a year.

[The man standing before you is not Parker, as you have already divined. His name is Elmo Utterly, and he has feloniously usurped the privileges and prerogatives of the aforesaid Parker. He is, however, deluded, and believes, for example, that he has prepared this examination.]

(INSERT TEXT OF 1973 EXAM HERE)

Since the crime took place [I refer to the examination], We have come into more information concerning the land of High Thefarie [or, if you will, Thuta Thefarie]. The great source is still the pseudo-examination [DATUM I], but the other Data will doubtless enable you to accomplish your task more accurately, and truly.

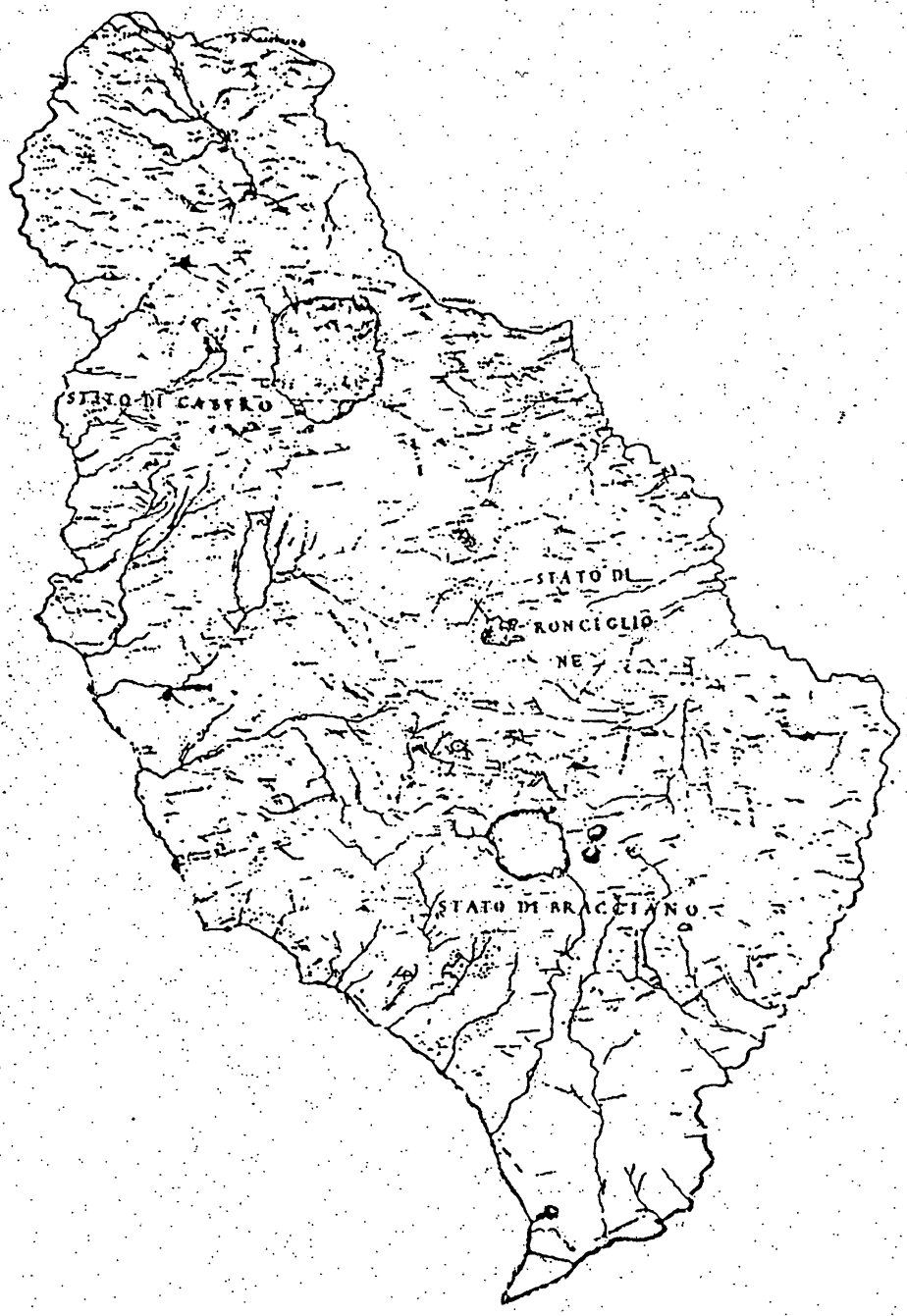
Your task? First read the evidence, paying particular attention to the direction on last year's "final"—so to speak—especially the introductory paragraphs. You will then bring all your creative instincts into play, employing any and all of the following data, and relate to this arrant impostor the full and complete details of ONE of the following subjects. Remember, you know the language, know the place, and know Parker. Also, you know what is meant by moral space...excuse me, MORAL SPACE.

1) The Rape of Eniaca, and What Followed
2) The Voyage of Dougal Boarson
3) The Reduction of the Bubastic Archipelago, 4111-4114
4) Of Avizha, the Halfling with the Taste for Wine, and his Triumphant Death at the Sack of Wongillion (Ronciglione?)
5) Trapped in Eniaca's Bower, or Doug In Deep
6) A Day in the Life: Growing Up in Thefarie Before the Terror
7) A Twist in the Perseid: A Ruined Rite de Passage
8) The War with Brummagem
9) Utterly's Smile: The Demiurge Departs
10) How to Get There and Back Again.

Oh. One of the pieces of information is absolutely false. Of course.

What can I say? The man was a fiend. Two early maps of the land follow. The first was employed in the examinations above.

Exhibit I: Freehand map, Italian, 17th-century, of no known locale, found in Room 817, Gayoso Hotel, Memphis, Tennessee, U.S.A., 17 August 1946.



Map 1: The Source, as Promulgated on 18 December 1973

Map 2: The Original HT Map, as Drawn in May 1978

TERMINAL PRAXEIS 1982-1998 [1]

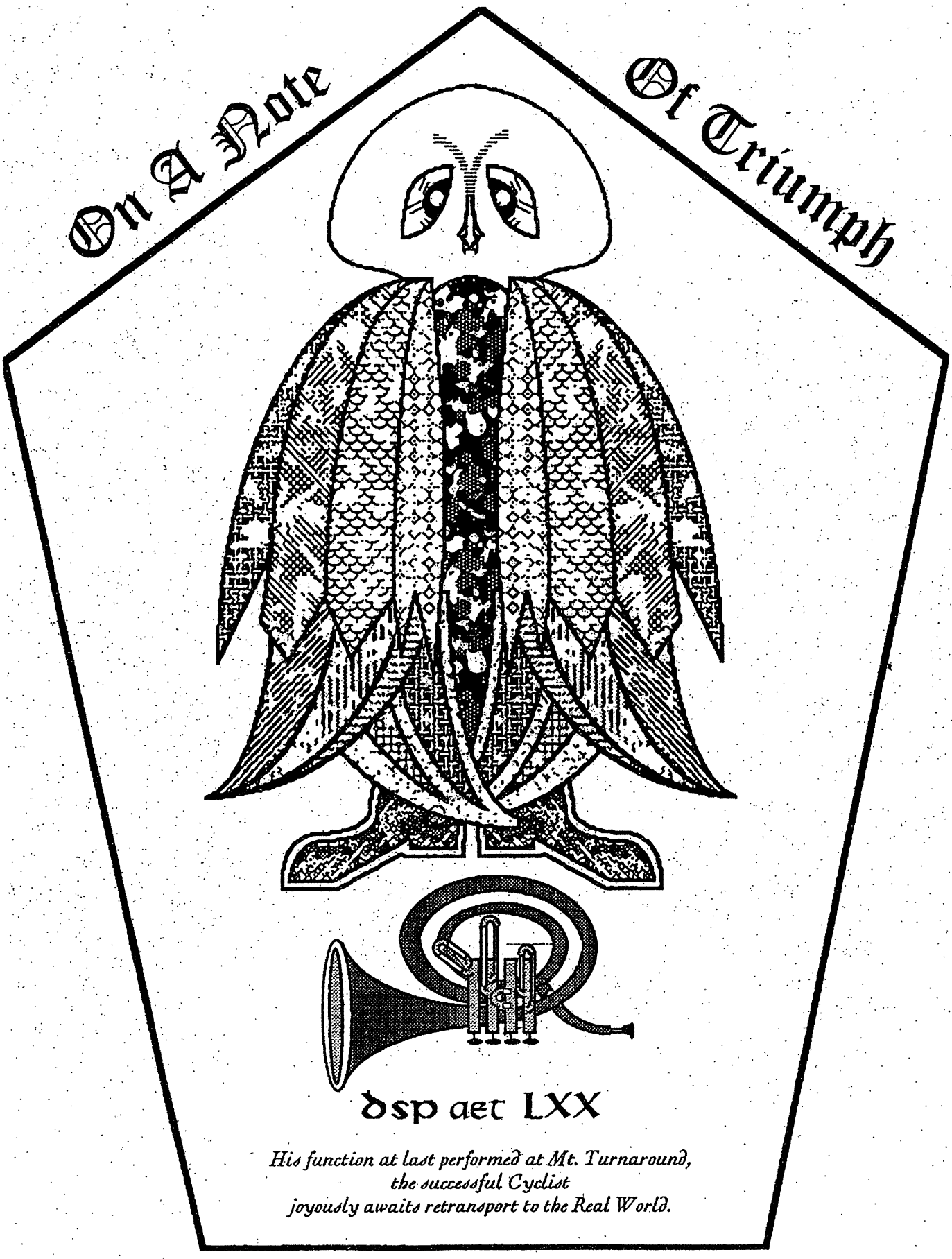
Short Question ID Subjects

1982:	People	1983:	Sayings [proverbs, etc.] Documents	1985:	Events Places [mainly Buildings]
1986:	Occupations Geographical Anomalies	1987:	Groups Micromaps	1988:	Gestures Architectural Inscriptions
1989:	Fauna Flora	1990:	Signs & Symbols Children's Toys	1991:	Pocket Items Holidays
1992:	Suburbs of Enphurli Songs	1993a:	"False Friends" Comestibles	1993b:	Collectibles [*Kitsch*] Stage Props
1994:	Gods Diseases	1995:	Roads Labels	1997:	Non-Five Anomalies Informative Scars
1998:	Coins Low Dives	1999:	Cinquains Presents		

Long Questions, with overall themes

1982:	[no theme]	Enna Tour; Girls' *rites de passage*; Cycle transition; BreakOut
1983:	[no theme]	Gardens of Barok; Hero/Place; Eucharistic Schism of Food War; Eniaca's deaths; Problems of Cyclend/Cyclarch; ƀsp's reading
1985:	[no theme]	Theatrical tours; Eniaca's "Mad Dash" and HIA/TUS; War Between the Sexes; Education of the young; Ritual/Plan/Pattern; Gaming and Gamers
1986:	[no theme]	Divorces; Building Boom of 605-608; Encirclement; Festivals, Ed the Cyclist; Cosmetic Surgery
1987:	Up/Down	Banquet Menu; ƀsp as Businessman; Star Map; Honeymoons; Schools of Painting; Thefarien Conceptual Indirection
1988:	Wretched Excess	Fiveday Doings; ƀsp and Taxes; ƀsp in Prison; the Broslyn Maze; Architectural Poetry; Bolsena WordRiots of 624
1989:	LastQuest Piglet, 616-622	Outfare in Low Thefarie; Rich vs. Poor; What Time Is It; PsychoPop Concert; Sojourn in SNUIAΦ; the Spiral Scratch Graffito
1990:	War Between Sexes, 622	Cause of War; War's Big Ideas; Ritual Slanging; Army Uniforms; Need for Chain of Command; Operations of War Analysis of The Battle of Ye Boure of Blisse
1991:	The Mavens of Clus, 586	ƀsp goes through a day in Clus [seven questions]
1992:	QuestLost Castle, 593-4	QLC and ƀsp's enforced stay there [six questions]
1993a:	The SALE at Mog, 602	Eniaca's shopping & death$_3$ [six questions]
1993b:	The Brummagem Tour, 599	GreaseTrap [four questions]; the SENSORIUM [two questions]
1994:	BAROK, 614	Mirrors and the Makynge of the Gardens
1995:	WindDown, 625	The Encounter at BluRuin
1997:	The Six Wild Oats, 575	Libration$_2$ at Arkhiv
1998:	ENDGAME, 625	Libration$_2$ at Mt. Turnaround
1999:	PERUÇ, 598	Peaches and the Misteaken (*sic*) Pent...

[1] Useful knowledge, but, you may ask, why is it *here*? Has to be somewhere.


On A Note
Of Triumph
dsp aet LXX
His function at last performed at Mt. Turnaround,
the successful Cyclist
joyously awaits retransport to the Real World.

from the

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT on the Terminal Praxis, 1995

It isn't this time of year at all. Oh, don't I wish.

But no; it is, horribly, early December. The shank of the year has begun, and it's suddenly Time. For me, for you. For us both.[1] For me to work into the arcana of High Thefarie, ðsp's topographized travail; for you to put up with that process, and learn—check that; to *recall*—as much as you can about the place before the day of the TERMINAL PRAXIS...which, as these things go, is at hand, the day after tomorrow. And I started this in early November. Oi.

I should like to spend Quality Time with you here, reassuring you, pointing out that my torture is at least as much as yours...but there's no time, this time. I therefore zoom to Specific Directions:

NOTICE!!!

Ever solicitous of your welfare, Your Preceptor & Guide herewith pronounces, officially, the Eff-Cee, or Fatal Commitment. The Long Questions, at least, in this year's TERMINAL PRAXIS will treat of one very confusing item:

The WindDown of 625

The *what*? Bear with me.

We are in penultimate mode, all of us, like it or not. The course winds down, the year winds down, Your P & G winds down, too. And, in our study of high Ðefarie, that intermittent otherworld, we find ourselves inevitably focusing on *WindDown*—that last year, Γ/XV/625, before the Last Battle and the endgame of Cyclend and Roundoff. And well may we focus, because the received writings convey little or nothing about those last frenzied next-to-last days. Consider the chronology that has been presented to you:

625: [70] Divorce V
- Eniaca writes PULUMXVA (HT 24.5), dies 5
- Marriage VI [!!]
- WoeDay, Lib_1: Verbal Summit at Vei crashes in confusion and vituperation;
- Class Struggle continues (HT 42.6)
- The Dead Awaken
- ☞ [CURIOUS OMISSION] ☜
- **Battle of Turnaround**
- *Cyclend/Cyclarch, Roundoff/Roundon*
- High Note (HT 21)

Curious Omission, indeed.

Now, the Dead Awakened—at Vei, of course; where else?—on the stroke of midnight that ended WoeDay, Lib_1. The Battle of **Turnaround** commenced on the Eve before WowDay, Lib_2. as the preliminary to the great shift. That leaves the entire second half of 625 unaccounted for in these chronicles, among them the burning question: Where was ðsp? Why was he late for the battle—in fact, almost too late to perform his Function, the High Note, the DoomRidden D-flat? It must have been something Important; after all, he'd been hanging around for more than a half-century waiting for the grand moment, and it's hardly humanly possible, even for him, to let it slip his mind. Where was he between WoeDay and WowDay?

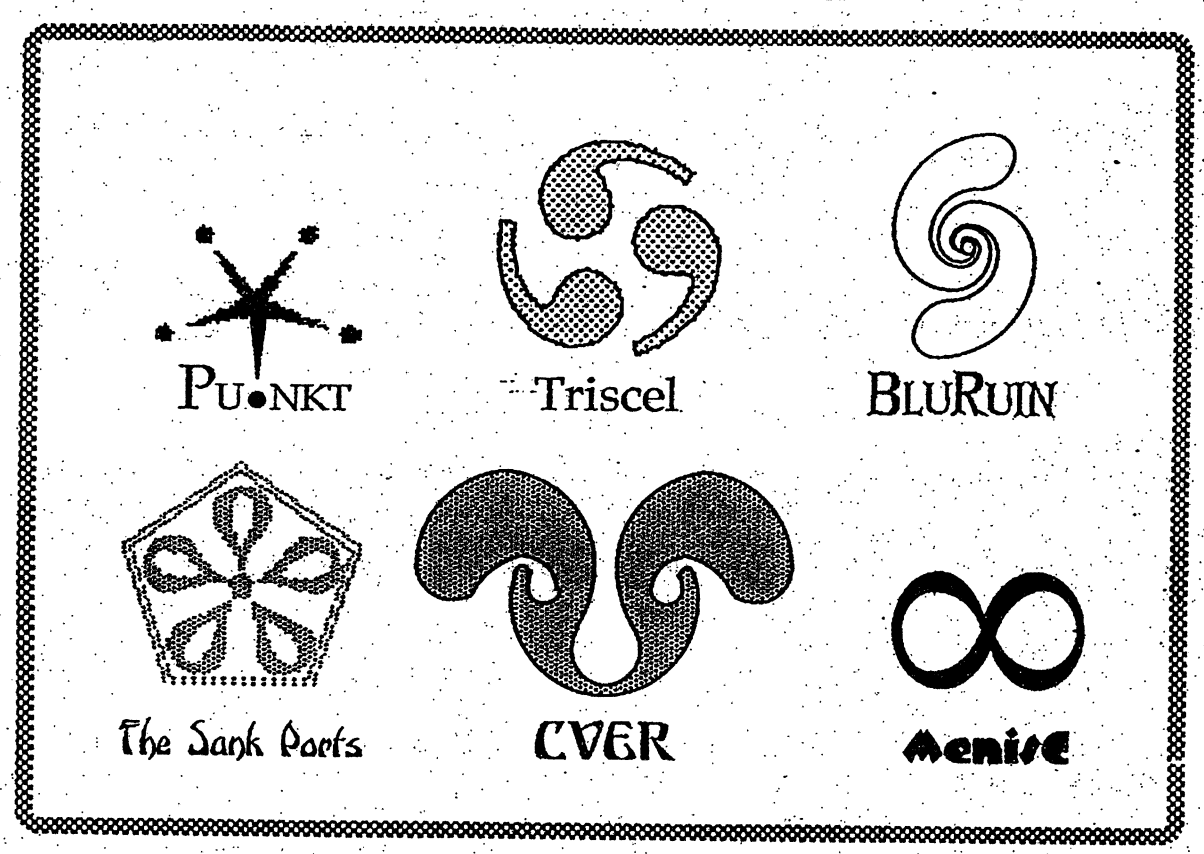
He wasn't at Vei: he'd left before it ended with the Recriminations that both caused and announced the crash of the

[1] A strange enough use of *both*, if you care to think of it, comprising *ca.* 35 individuals. On the one hand, there's Me, or rather I—who am, at least to my knowledge as I write this, singular. Well, that, too, but what I mean is, there's one of me. On the other hand, there's You, Y'all, numbering 33 or 34. Such are the weightings of academic clout that the two persons, first and second, balance somehow, and we can be subsumed under *both*. You may not believe it, but I'm a modest man, one who feels—or possibly *feel*; should I use a first person verb here?—quite uncomfortable at the syntactical enshrinement of an archaic class structure that I thought went west during the '60's. But I'm no revolutionary—modest men are rarely such—and so, at least for the extent of this handout, we'll have to soldier on under the current system. Sorry, and all that. [Why did I bring it up if I wasn't going to do anything about it? Well, I wanted you to know that, though the matter is out of my hands, I'm on Your Side, really. Honest. Anything short of implementation, I'm your man.]

Verbal Summit. He hadn't gone back to Tummling: guards had been set. He was still under the ban at Bolsena from his Fifth Public **DISGRACE**; they would have picked him up in a trice. None of his usual haunts could hold him. No, he was somewhere else.

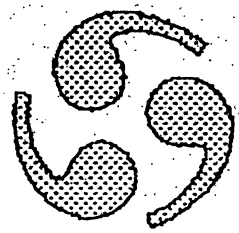
On an island, in fact. The phrase "surrounded by water" occurs in the fragments of his *CycloRheme*,[2] and the phrase can only mean that. But which island? It can't have been Brummagem; warrants were still out, after 25 years. Nor either island of Nada, where the food disagreed with him. And GodTrust...well, he'd done that bit, whenever it happened, and the memories of his shilling to tourists were too painful [see HT 43]. And, just to exhaust the possibilities, the Flying Island of Tlusc had long since departed—back in 607 [see HT 34]. Which leaves us—what? no islands at all?

No. There are at least six Thefarien islands, or island clusters, hitherto unmapped, where he might have been.



Let's cut down the options, however, by noting that two of the above choices are so unlikely as to remove themselves from contention immediately: The Sank Ports may be positively soaked with history, but they are sodden with water as well, nestling 40 feet beneath the surface of the Ocean off The Damnable Delta. No chance there. And Punkt, during the period in question, was an Adverbialist stronghold; he'd never have risked showing his face in the place. Which leaves us with Four Locales for ðsp's whereabouts:

He might have been at

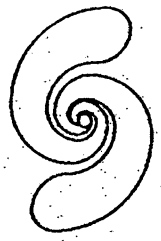


Triscel

Home of sedition and interposition; set about with fever-trees and factions; possessed of the Ruins of Patma.

[2] The Cyclist's Last Words, religiously taken down and preserved for the edification of the Cycle to come—and just as religiously lost without much trace.

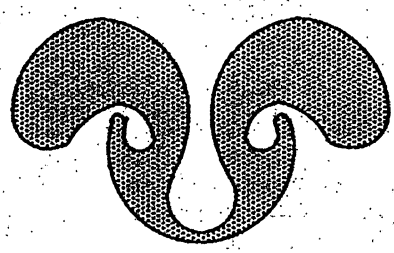
He might have been at



BLURUIN

Home of conjure and cant; set about with withies and deadfalls; possessed of the very Blue Ruin.

He might have been at



CVER

Home of dialectic and dysfunction; set about with images and homages; possessed of the Collapsed Colonnade.

He might have been at

Menise

Home of losels and lookalikes; set about with ear-blanks and eye-mines; possessed of the Direly Damaged Dacha.

He was, of course, at one and one only place—in the midst of a Ruin, surrounded by water, and coping with his Fate as best he could. The day of reckoning had come. No, he hadn't forgotten his Final Function. He longed for nothing more than to be there already, facing Mt. Turnaround and waiting for its fateful revolution...but his past had caught up with him: The Pursuer—or, rather, the PurSu*Ant*, was stalking him through the ruin, and...

But why am I telling you all of this? You know it, and *You* will tell *Me*. Your Six [6] Long Questions will be drawn from that Fell Event in the ruin on the island, and you will chose one [1] and fill me in to your and my heart's content. About island, ruin, PurSuAnt, or anything else. Anything else relevant, of course.

TURCE MURILA,

dsp

Identification Lists
from the Terminal Praxis, 1995

Emerging as you just have from the confines of Θefarien Materials, *you may feel that the chronicling and delimning of* High Therane *exhibits rather more than minor compulsive-obsessive behavior on the part of Your Preceptor & Guide. This insistence on Getting Everything In—why does he do it? To what conceivable end? What justifies the staggering employment of time, paper, and disk space? Why not get a life instead?*

To the implication behind all such queries Yr P&G nods somberly in assent...and then returns to his self-chosen, overdetermined wrestle with the Great Void of Unknowing. Because, you see, this is important. *On that day, not too many months hence, when* wrap *is finally called,* Δsp *wishes the record to be as full as possible.* Θefarien Materials *will constitute the sole memorial to that Glorious Other Place, and from it, he hopes, the world of* High Θerane *will be somehow, well,* reconstructible.

To this end, O Best Beloved, these ID questions function mightily. How many individuals, places, comestibles...well, how many items, *integral to the existence, the very warp and woof of* HT, *would have perished utterly, were it not for their mere mention in these listings on a dour December day? And, almost more significant, how many of these items, central to these curious chronicles, would have received no notice or expansion, had it not been for their initial recall under this rubric? The names of* Morris Leftwich, *and* Lonespire, *and* The Flying Island of Tlusc *spring easily to mind: You read them here first.*

And so, O Better-than-Best Beloved, be of good cheer. You are not merely slogging through the mindlessly tralatician observances of a corrupt and bankrupt educational system [though I do not deny the usefulness of that function]; you are also aiding and abetting The Work—*the preservation and extension of* Res Θeranae *through time and space. Ennobled by this sense of higher calling,* Take Heart!

☛ *Do not, however, Take* too much *Heart. These are, after all, Short Questions, trivial pursuits, and the total time expended on Section A, SubSections 1 and 2, should not exceed One Hour. For heaven's sake, keep a sense of proportion.*

1: ROADS

It had to happen. The next—and possibly last—version of the HT map simply *must* include roads, rights-of-way, thoroughfares, artery, highways, freeways, *routes*. No matter about the workings of HIA/TUS; that'll come in due time. What we need is the lines, the lines that go on the map; we can get people moving on them later. It's a matter of simple truth, really. The roads—as you well know—were there, quite well-known and quite well-used. As matters stand, only one road in the whole place is charted, and that a very minor one: the "Old Torn Pike" that runs from ENPHURLI to BRSTLAÇ on the Miasm, depicted in a supplemental area map in Θefarien Materials, p. 149. All other Otherworlds can well snicker at HT's cartographic deficiency, which presents no way of getting from one place to another.

Because the fact is, they were there. Thefariens certainly got around their country, they were even devotees of a game—Pentapoly—which involved visiting the Five Principal Cities in succession. Produce moved from country to city. Wars of all sorts were fought, and the combatants were not pinned in place. And Δsp, much as he hated to stir, covered almost every foot of the place in his half-century there. He had to make it somehow. Wherefore, I shall enlist your aid, requesting that you dig to the depths of your recollective powers.

Below you will find listed the official names of 12 [TWELVE] Thefarien roads, all traversed by Δsp during his stay. Choose 3 [THREE] for your knowing treatment. In each case, give:

1st, the termini of a given road: Where did it start? Where end?
2nd, the a brief disquistion on the terrain through which it passed..
3rd, any and all facts about travelling on it, briefly noted.
4th, its importance for Δsp voyaged on it.
5th, indicate your roads on the blank HT map provided; turn it in with your bluebook.

☛ NB: At least ONE [1] of your three choices should be really distinctive, a noteworthy

road that justifies your writing, and Your P & G's reading, the answer. Which is to say, spread yourself on this one, possibly by the inclusion of an enthralling narrative.
NB again: At least one of the roads you choose should be long, a way that can cover much of the country.

1. The Artful Artery
2. Perpetual Promenade
3. Shuntpath
4. Roundaboutabout
5. Rambling Road
6. Broadpass
7. The Highest Way
8. The Primeval Track
9. The Damnable Detour
10. The Intrastite
11. PerilPath
12. Primrose Pike

2: LABELS

The Epilogue to Version 2.2 of Θefarien Materials, to be found on p. 82 of **The Grey Dominance**, exhibits, among other *curiosa*, the heading **Items That Are Being Deciphered**...which is to say, things that **Dsp** hoped he would get around to. Lurking under said heading is the listing *Seven Labels, of assorted provenience*. The indulgent reader this time around may have spared an indulgent smile for this, regarding it as merely Yet Another Implicit Promise by the Great Projector, a statement of Things To Be Done that may have been made in all seriousness back in 1988, but really had no more chance of being completed then than it does now. Well, this is to inform these Implicit Critics that they are—*ha!*—wrong, wrong, *wrong*. Not only has **Dsp** deciphered the refractory heptad, he has discovered and translated five [5] more...just enough, oddly, to fill out a set for you to choose from for discussion on this *Praxis*. So there.

It affords a melancholy comfort to us in the Real World—to **Dsp**, anyway—to contemplate these symptomatic stigmata of a distinctly other culture. We are beset by labels; so were/are they. How like us they must be/have been! As usual, nothing could be further from the truth. As you shall demonstrate in the discussion of Thefarien labels which you shall shortly make. But first, some ruminations:

Labels—what do they do? A brief survey, carried out at white heat on a totally inadequate data base, will give us a start of sorts. RW Labels often inform us of:

1. Creator	4. Treatment	7. Material(s)	10. Restrictions
2. Provenience	5. Size	8. Danger(s)	11. Dosages
3. Use	6. Quantity	9. Premiums	12. Antidotes

Not to forget such things as Entertainment—compare a box of *Cap'n Crunch*, which is *all* label.

So, one might say, went Thefarien Labels. Except for one thing: Though the text of the basic Thefarien Label is remarkably like our own; the site of that label is almost certain to be completely *other*. Unfortunately, in assembling his dozen examples, **Dsp** not only ripped them all from their original homes, but neglected to note, or even try to remember, what those homes were. All he really knows is a Rule of Thumb: If he thinks a Label resided, in High Thefarie, on *anything* even remotely resembling the logical home of an analogous Label in the Real World, he is dead wrong. This is somewhat exacerbated by the fact that the Thefariens put Labels on everything—and, indeed, on every*one*. Yes, people, too. And not merely *manufactured* objects, by the way. Anyway, the poor chap was disconsolate in the extreme until he bethought himself of *you*—you who know and treasure every last minim of minutiae concerning the greatest and the least items of Thefariena. And so, it is up to you to set his collection in some sort of order.

On the next page, you will find reproduced, in translation, 12 (TWELVE) Thefarien Labels acquired by **Dsp** during his stay. Choose 3 [THREE] for treatment. For each, give:

1st, a name and description of the item it was originally attached to.
2nd, an interpretation and explanation of the text of the Label as attached.
3rd, the item's importance to **Dsp**, with date and place

☛ NB: At least ONE [1] of your three choices should have accompanied a human, or at least a being, and one of the items labelled should be of considerable importance, worth spreading yourself on.

---

[1] Understand that this heading concerns actual *physical* labels, affixed to various more or less common items of everyday life. With the transferred meaning of the word, the pigeonholing epithet, this question does not deal. This is not to say that High Thefarie lacked such usually pejorative appellations; regrettably, it was as bigoted as we, though along—or within—different parameters.

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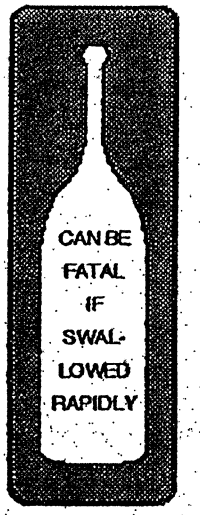

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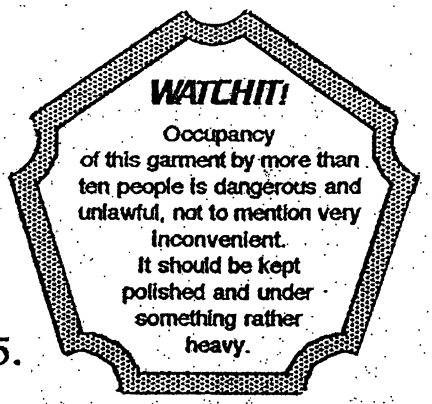

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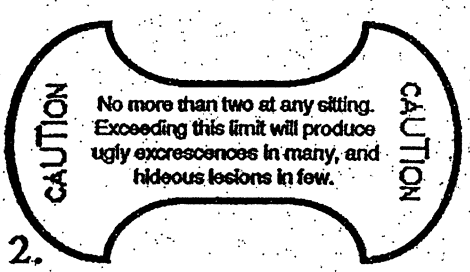

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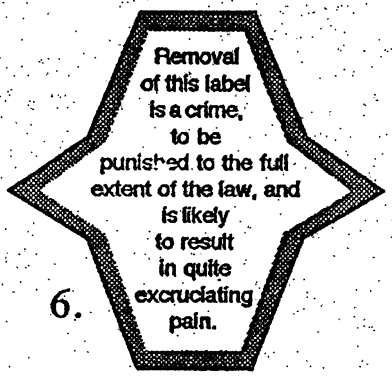

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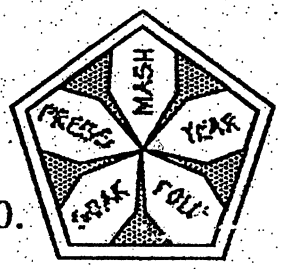

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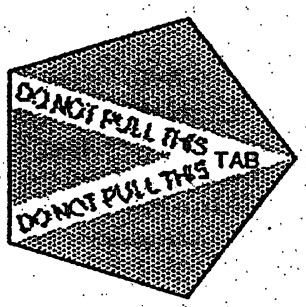

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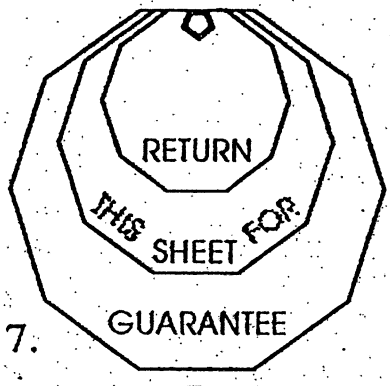

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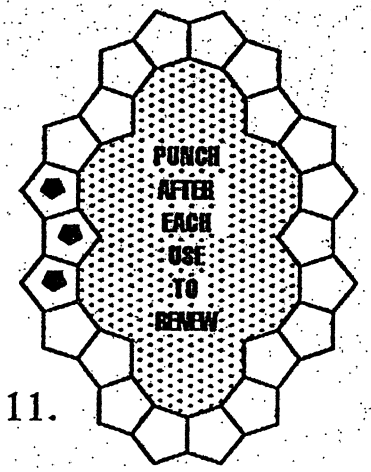

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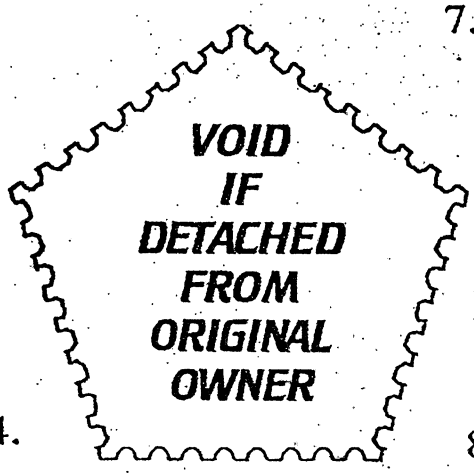

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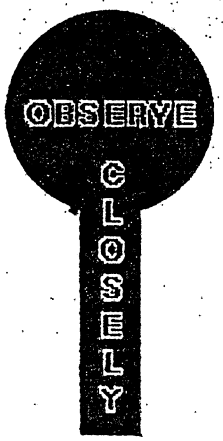

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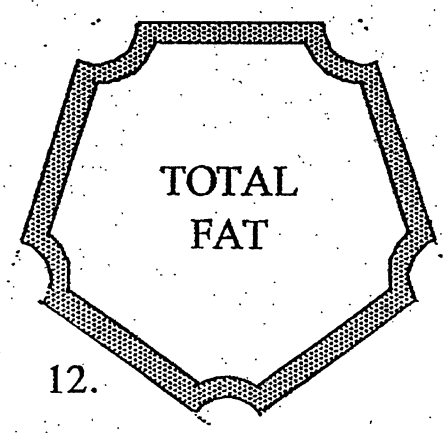


LONG QUESTIONS
from the Terminal Praxis, 1995

but first, a

Corrigendum:
The Blurr

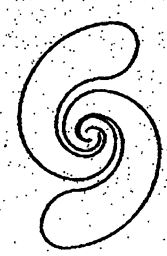
To correct a possible ambiguity. In the verse chronicle accompanying the score of the Widdershins Improvisation [HT 34, p. 69] we find:

But there we were ensconced
on an islet
in a lake
on another islet
in another lake
on yet another islet
in the midst of
blue Ruin...

The reference, of course, is to the Wily Islet of ʃɷsc, site of the Utterly Misbegotten Concert in Summer$_2$, 607:

ʃɷsc

Even the most casual peruser of the most inaccurate Thefarien map will have observed that something is wrong here. ʃɷsc, before its sudden departure for parts unknown, was scarcely in the middle of Lake Ruin, but quite near the shore. ðsp, with his usual hyperextension of Poetic License, appears to have meant no more by *midst* than that it was surrounded by the waters of that baleful body of water...and, never one to err by halves, he committed yet another invasion on truth's easement in referring to the Lake itself as *blue Ruin*. Like all other accumulations of fresh water in HT, Lake Ruin was *puce*—the usual grayish purple that induced such heartfelt throbs in pursuers of the picturesque. The source of the error—other than his common semi-automatic procedure when writing poety—was really quite evident: There *was* a *blue Ruin*, or rather a *Blue Ruin*, or, to be quite exact, a "BluRuin" in the vicinity—the curiously shaped island that occupies the exact center of Lake Ruin, but is obscured, on your Map, by the name of the Lake:



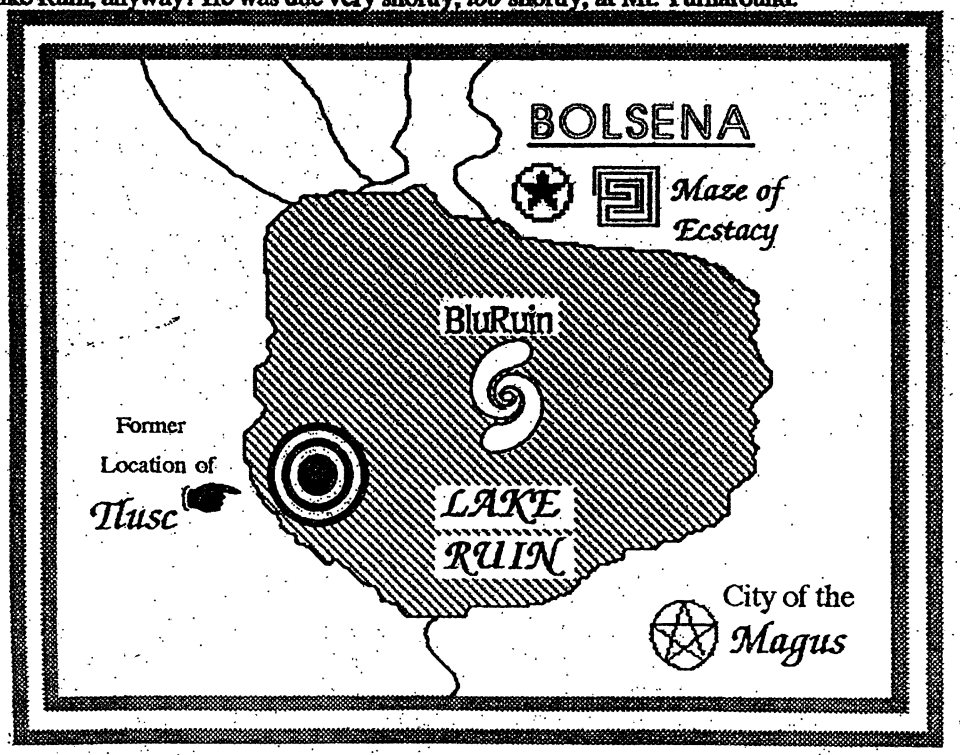
BluRuin

Interestingly enough, this name for the *island* certainly predates the Fershtummelte Fludde [*sic*]—at Cycle XV's beginning, when the River Merci swelled impossibly and raised the level of the Lake to a height that inundated Bolsena, offering the Arch-Patriarch Moï the chance to swoop from his sloop and reform the city's rich corruption into the bland vanilla of his vision. [HT 14] The Fludde, cataclysmic catastrophe though it undoubtedly was, did not originate the name of *Ruin* in those parts, or give it to the Lake, for that matter. It was the *island* that named the Lake, and not the other way round.

Not that it was the island who started the name, either. "BluRuin" (ZR-χAÇ) was originally the name of a *structure* on that island, a tatterdemalion tower of tremendous antiquity[1] that lurked at its exact center. Its purpose was unknown; at least, no record of any satisfactory solution to the burning question, "What *is* this?" had survived from earlier Cycles, and none of the conjectures proposed during XV—hostel, hatchery, twist-house, mudgeon-hold, charismatikon, bluffsee—commands the least credence. It must have been *important*, that we know. Such a location as it had! Peaked high in the center of the island, on that focus towards which the steadily rising wings inevitably spiralled and tended, it had a majestic view of the entire Lake—such a view that its (again conjectural) lack of all but the tiniest windows seems totally inexplicable. There may have been a platform on top, of course, a sort of "widow's walk" from which the deadly reaches of Lake Ruin could be descried in all directions; one would like to think there had been. But, if such a thing had existed, the researches that had taken place before the entire Lake was taboo'ed after the Concert in 607 had not uncovered any traces.

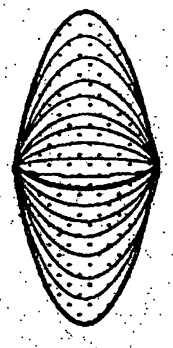
But it deserved its name. ZR-χAÇ, it had been titled sometime in the mists of Cycle XII or XIII, and ZR it certainly was, bluer than the imagination can posit, beyond Indigo to, well, *Indig-est*. That much survived; the rest was shapeless, a huge, lichen-covered lump at the island's peak with all the distinction of a tired spittoon.

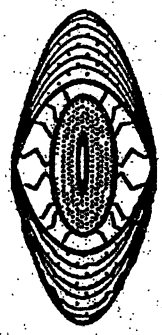
It had sagged more than somewhat. The millennia and the temperate climate had had their ways with it, and, from a distance it might have been a natural excrescence on the landscape. But inside it was something else. Shattered and tattered, ragbag and bedraggled, but clearly a *made* structure. Made by whom? For what? And how had ðsp made his way to Lake Ruin, anyway? He was due very shortly, *too* shortly, at Mt. Turnaround.

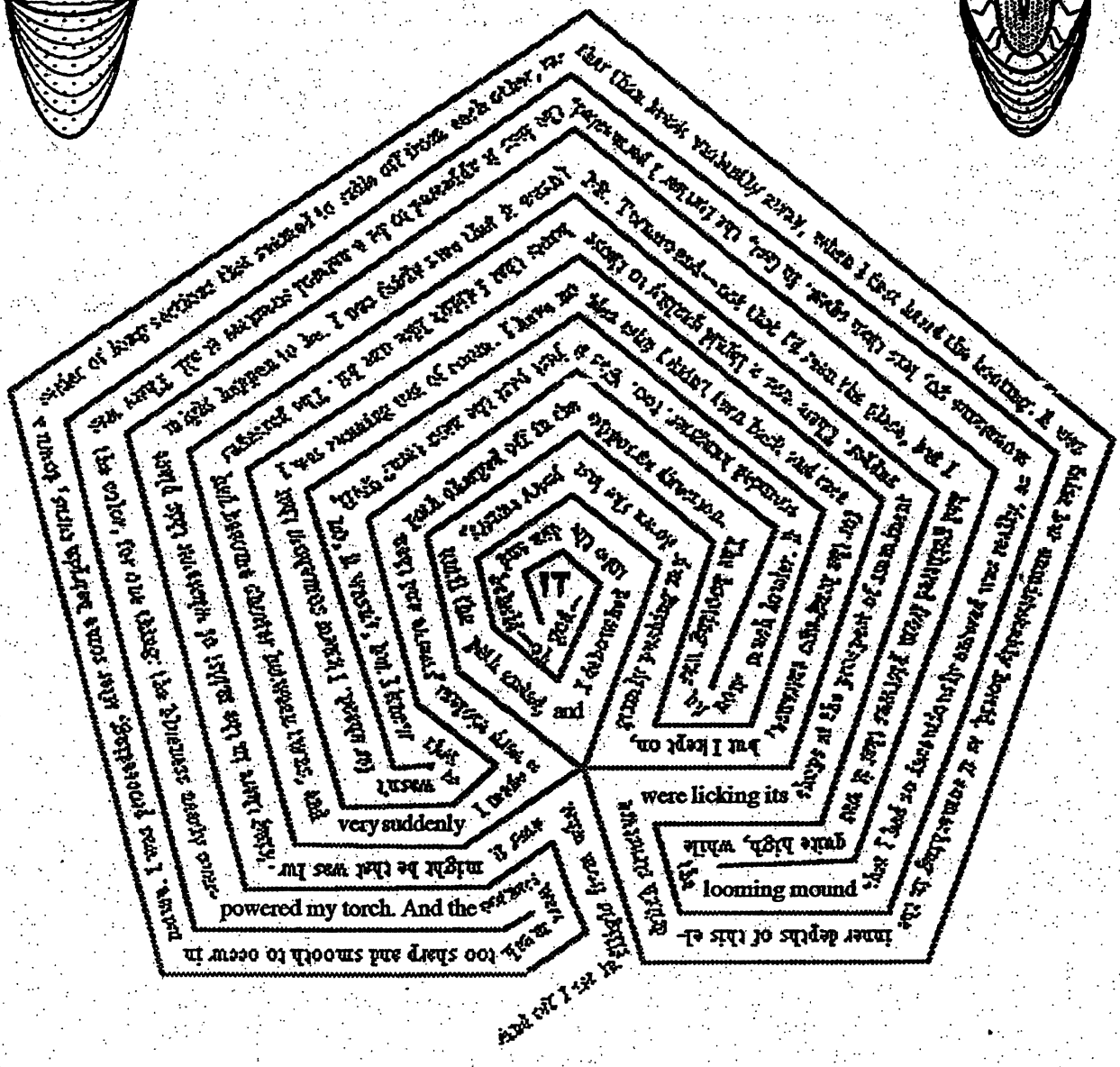


[1] It is conjectured that the structure was first erected in Cycle XI or thereabouts. Staggering thought, that.

EXHIBIT C: Into the Ruin







the PurSuAnt

NOW, THE LONGE QUESTIOUNS

I. ðsp, of course, hardly expected to be at LAKE RUIN, of all places, least of all on the island of BluRuin, which he had only seen across the puce waves at the Misbegotten Concert more than seventeen years before. In his usual fashion, he found himself unable to figure the whole mess out. He had left Vei just before WoeDay, 625, in plenty of time, triangulating—or rather *pentangulating*—short distances in order to deliver himself, fairly intact, at Mt. Turnaround in time for his Function on WowDay. It had been a venturesome trip (he still bore the scars), but he'd been making fairly good time until he'd stopped for a snack at Noshery Town, by Enphurli. It was ÇOÀLZ, he remembered, the Thefarien approach to pastrami. He'd bitten into it, chewed, rolled it around his tongue...and must have blacked out, because the next thing he new, here he was, scruffy and tattered, aching, on the island in the middle of the lake hundreds of ZILÀCÀL to the, well, let's call it *North*. From the juxtaposition of the suns as they plummeted into the puce, it was sometime in $Winter_2$—*late* in $Winter_2$. How had he come here? What had he been doing all these months?

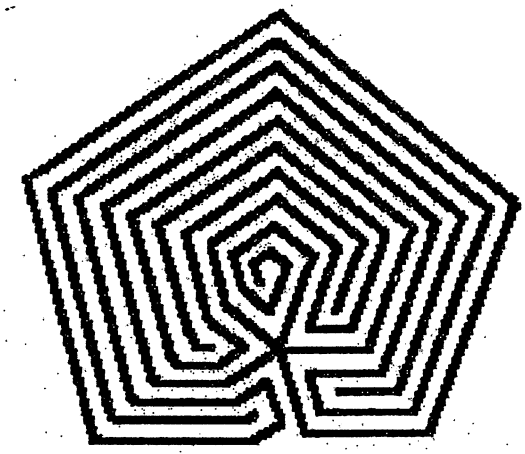
> A good question—or rather pair of questions. You may wish to answer it. Trace ðsp's trip from Vei to BluRuin, in considerable detail, noting with particular relish the madness in which he indulged after Noshery Town. Assign a cause, if you can: Was it something wrong with the pastrami—I mean, the ÇOÀLZ? Anyway, fetch him up on the island.
> If you elect this question, indicate the route on the blank map you are already handing in for the Road Identifications. Distinguish his route somehow from the Roads you have posted in your ID answer.
> You need not solve the problem of HIATUS.

II. ðsp, of course, had dabbled in Ruins in his world-building days, though mostly as a designer. Yes, a *designer*. *Faux* Ruins, modern structures counterfeiting unthinkable antiquity, there were a necessary part of a successful world-builder's kit in late-XV High Thefarie, just as they had been a common recourse of European landscape gardeners during that time oddly called the Enlightenment. A time of sentiment, in both cases, prizing the interplay of present and past that Ruins provoke. Let me quote a theorist from England in the 18th century CE:

> All remains excite an enquiry into the former state of the edifice, and fix the mind in a contemplation on the use it was applied to; besides the characters expressed by their style and position, they suggest ideas which would not arise from the buildings, if entire. The purposes of many have ceased; an abbey, or a castle, if complete, can now be no more than a dwelling; the memory of the times, and of the manners, to which they were adapted, is preserved only in history, and in ruins; and certain sensations of regret, of veneration, or compassion, attend the recollection: nor are these confined to the remains of buildings which are now in disuse; those of an old mansion raise reflections on the domestic comforts once enjoyed, and the ancient hospitality which reigned there. Whatever building we see in decay, we naturally contrast its present to its former state, and delight to ruminate on the comparison.

This may explain the powerful effect that the Blue Ruin—the Ruin, not the island—had on ðsp. Faux-designer he may have been, but he knew how Ruins worked, and he was appreciative. And so should you be, O Best Belovèd, and so should you.

> Show what it was that ðsp appreciated by reconstructing the Blue Ruin—the Ruin, not the island—in some detail. Go far beyond the sketchy clues given above [pp. 223-4], the dumpy drawing and the word Infested Maze (which spirals, more or less, down into the depths, as you recall). Draw it if you can.
> More important than this, <u>account for it.</u> It may go back to Cycle XII or even before; its antiquity is immense? What was it? How did it look? How did it function in those far-off days in a High Thefarie so different from the one we know at love? Tell it all to your eager readers.
> Oh. Here's a clearer drawing of the Maze. Every little bit helps:



III. dsp, of course, had heard of the legend of the PurSuAnt—that hideous meld of human and insect that runs down the guilty and leaves them to stew in an acrid blend of bile and formic acid—but he hardly expected to experience it at first hand. Until that point, our protagonist was, I fear, a mere psychoteratologist, one who believe that all Monsters, beyond the occasional sport or freak that Nature throws up to frighten us, are basically mental projections, non-existent fabulous beings to which we attribute anything and everything that is wrong with us and with our society. His account of his stay in High Thefarie demonstrates this rationalist bias, too, I fear. You will search high and low therein for reports of anything more frightening than the Snollygosters outside and the occasional χàçmàχ inside, the laughable, mild χàçmàχ, which he characterizes as a *horror*—as though High Thefarie didn't about in utterly awful monsters of the worst sort.

> Rectify this shortage. Create a worthy addition to the hitherto inadequate teratology of High Thefarie by presenting a truly staggering assemblage of monsters such as infest that otherwise blithe Otherworld. Don't fob your reader off with pop-psych rationalizations; give us the real stuff, monsters on monsters, systematically arranged. Drawings would be nice, but are not necessary. System, that's the thing.

IV. If, of course, you wish you treat of an Itinerary, but Long Questioun #1 above doesn't fit your fancy, there is always the lastt part of dsp's trip instead—the Mad Dash in the pent of Libration$_2$, 625, that somehow fetched him up, scuzzy and smelling greatly of formic acid, at the Assembly in front of Mt. Turnaround just before WowDay. Lots

> Trace the stages of dsp's Mad Dash from BluRuin to Mt. Turnaround in the pent of Libration$_2$, 625, following the general scheme set forth in Questioun #1 above.

V. The Encounter, of course, of dsp with the PurSuAnt in the depths of the Blue Ruin on BluRuin in Lake Ruin, a fascinating example of the interplay between human and monster, still lacks its chronicler.

> Present, in all its hideous glory, the encounter between dsp and the PurSuAnt, paying particular attention to (1) the utilization of the Blue Ruin itself as a battleground, and (2) a detailed answer to the burning question, How the Hell Did He Get Out of That? Be very detailed.

VI. Islands, of course, grip us. Ever and always.

> If none of the above subjects really grip you, well, then, place the three (3) other islands—Cver, Menisc, and Triscel—somewhere around the map of High Thefarie, and expatiate learnedly on their flora, fauna, peculiarities, and anything else.
> If you choose to elect this Questioun, however, do reflect that such a choice may well infuriate Your Preceptor and Guide, who wants to learn more about the Penultimate Procrastination.

TURXE MURILÀ,
dsp

from the PRELIMINARY STATEMENT on the Terminal Praxis, 1997

Didn't think we'd make it.

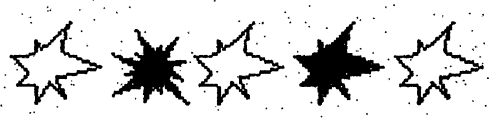
But here we are, arrived at the term's end, all right, all right. We have stuck our nose into May, blessed month, after the concerted and concentrated cruelty of April, with its brutalized lilacs. Bloody and rather bowed.

Still, no problem, really. Piece of cake. Downhill, now; this one writes itself.

Last time, I wrote, "I should like to spend Quality Time with you here, reassuring you, pointing out that my torture is at least as much as yours..." This time, however, it wouldn't be true. My part is sheer ease.

NOTICE!!!

Ever solicitous of your welfare, Your Preceptor & Guide herewith pronounces, officially, the Eff-Cee, or Fatal Commitment. The Long Questions, at least, in this year's TERMINAL PRAXIS will treat:



Oh-oh...

Well, let's try it again:

Oi...

I'm sorry. Something's gone wrong. I don't understand.

It seemed so simple, really. The last Terminal Praxis, in December 1995, dealt with *WindDown*—that last year, Γ/XV/625, before the Last Battle and the endgame of Cyclend and Roundoff. It followed, as the night the day, that this Terminal Praxis, which might well be the last, should deal with the *last* Last Things, the end of δsp's stay in high Θefarie, what we would call, not *WindDown*, but:

Hui...

We, or make that *I*, seem to have encountered a snag. Something somewhere refuses to let me end high Θefarie, or rather have *you* end it, next Wednesday. I can't even type *Wind*...well, you know. Which means that I have to revise my plan, dig out a New Subject for you to excercise your staggering knowledge in the elucidation of which.

I can see its source, I think. Put it this way: I wanted you to deal with the Apocalypse, not merely Tarχι 's but h. Θ.'s, the end of the Chronology, after the Curious Omission covered last time:

625: [70] **Battle of Turnaround:**
Cyclend/Cyclarch, Roundoff/Roundon
High Note (HT 21)
XVI 1: [70] As year begins, ðsp disappears [transported suddenly to RW on 17 May 1979, aged 52 years minus 10 days]

As it happens, the analogic date in the RW calendar to HT XVI 1, which is to say ðsp's seventieth birthday, will occur in 26 days, on Tuesday, May 27, 1997. So, in a curious way, the events that you will, or rather would have, been writing about on Wednesday, May 7, 1997...these won't or wouldn't have happened yet. Which would create a basic flaw in the fabric of that confused universe that contains both the RW and high Θefarie, resulting in...well, who knows? The end of spacetime as we know it, or worse. The absolute implosion of the two worlds. Possibly. Probably, even.

Oh, I know that the picky types among you will point out that the date RW 5/27/97 will never really have any connection with the first day of HT XVI/1. ðsp's not going to go on being 70; he'll be retransported to the RW on 5/17/79, when he lacked ten days of being 52. So what's the worry?

Well, *I'm* not worried. But I'm not the being that makes it impossible for me to assign the subject. Something—the divine bookkeeper, maybe, that runs things—Is Apprehensive. He—She—It—whatever—doesn't really dare disturb the universe. No more do I. I simply can't risk it. This is an imperfect universe, I agree...but how many have we got?

So, alack and alas for all thinking and planning. What will your Terminal Praxis treat? Not the Absolute End, which will have to be reserved for the next, and last, go-through with ParaGeography. When it will all have happened, and the Nature of Things is safe for a bit.

What, then? Something safe. Something long ago. Something *over*.

Well, consider that Chronology again:

573: [18 minus 10 days—from RW date 17 May 1979, at RW age 52 minus 10 days]
Spring$_2$: ðsp arrives in Bredna's Bight, off Godtrust; rescued by W. Windlass
Vestibule (HT 3)
Same Night: Time of the Great Unlinking (HT 36.3)
Fall$_1$: ðsp enrolls in 5-year course in WorldBuilding at Arkhiv
574: [19] First Winter Term (HT 8)
⇨ 575: [20]
576: [21] On Winter Vacation (HT 10) ðsp unwittingly involved in Quinquest to West Eniaca dies$_1$ at Port Farie

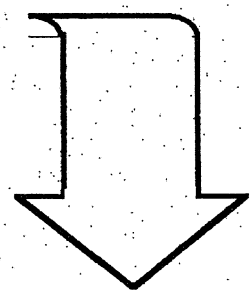
The Early Years were a time for Finding Out. For Learning the Lay of the Land. Life was full and active. Why the curious gap at ðsp's 20th year? What was he trying to hide?

No help for it; you'll have to tell me about it. The Your Preceptor & Guide herewith pronounces, officially, the Eff-Cee, or Fatal Commitment. Long Questions, at least, in this year's TERMINAL PRAXIS will treat:

WILD OATS ...or do I mean WILD OATHS ?

No matter; you'll find out. Proceed to...

POST-PRELIMINARY STATEMENT



from the

POST-PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

on the Terminal Praxis, 1997

WILD OATS, NOT ~~WILD OATHS~~

ARXIV was a University town; you could tell that. That it also combined the HΘ equivalent of National Archives was almost incidental, until later. The architecture, of an abortive school known at Secular Spiral, was unremarkable in the highest. The Devotion to Learning—learning of sorts—was intense and praiseworthy, save that it seemingly never knew when to stop.

In Fall$_1$ of XV/573, δsp, barely arrived in High Θefarie, feeling that he simply had to get away from the pietistic clutches of his rescuer Walthar Windlass, boated to the mainland from Godtrust and made his way cross country to ARXIV, where in an ill hour he enrolled in the 5-year program in World-Building. A curious choice, given his lack of manual dexterity and basic inability to visualize? Did he think, possibly, that he was setting out to learn *Word*-Building? No; the pun, for such it almost is, doesn't work in Thefarien, and he was not so simple as to be misled by English equivalents; certainly not.

But enroll he did, with never a thought for the disasters—and lawsuits—that lay ahead. By the end of his third year [ZELKRTÇEÇIZM CI], in fact, when he had made his tortured way into the middle of the curriculum, he even felt fairly confident about his ability to finish the course, possibly with a wee tad of academic glory. Indeed, as if he were being set up for the high drop, the year went well. He survived his nemesis, the professor of the year-long course in CAUSE; he played in what we might as well call a band; he participated in the third-year play; he got a job in the Library; he met Eniaca. And he partied. He sowed his Wild Oats with an application that Windlass, back on Godtrust, might well have wondered at. All in all, a good year.

Until it ended, with a crash, at YearEnd, the eleven days of Libration$_2$, WowDay, and Shake that brought XV/575, and his academic prospects, to a shuddering conclusion. What precisely happened is a matter of some dispute, given the decay of his remembering faculty, his ἀνάμνησις, as years went on and disasters multiplied. Still, that he Blew It thoroughly is a matter of no doubt at all. Further, there's no real worry about precision, since You know, O Best Belovèd, and will of course delight in informing Us.

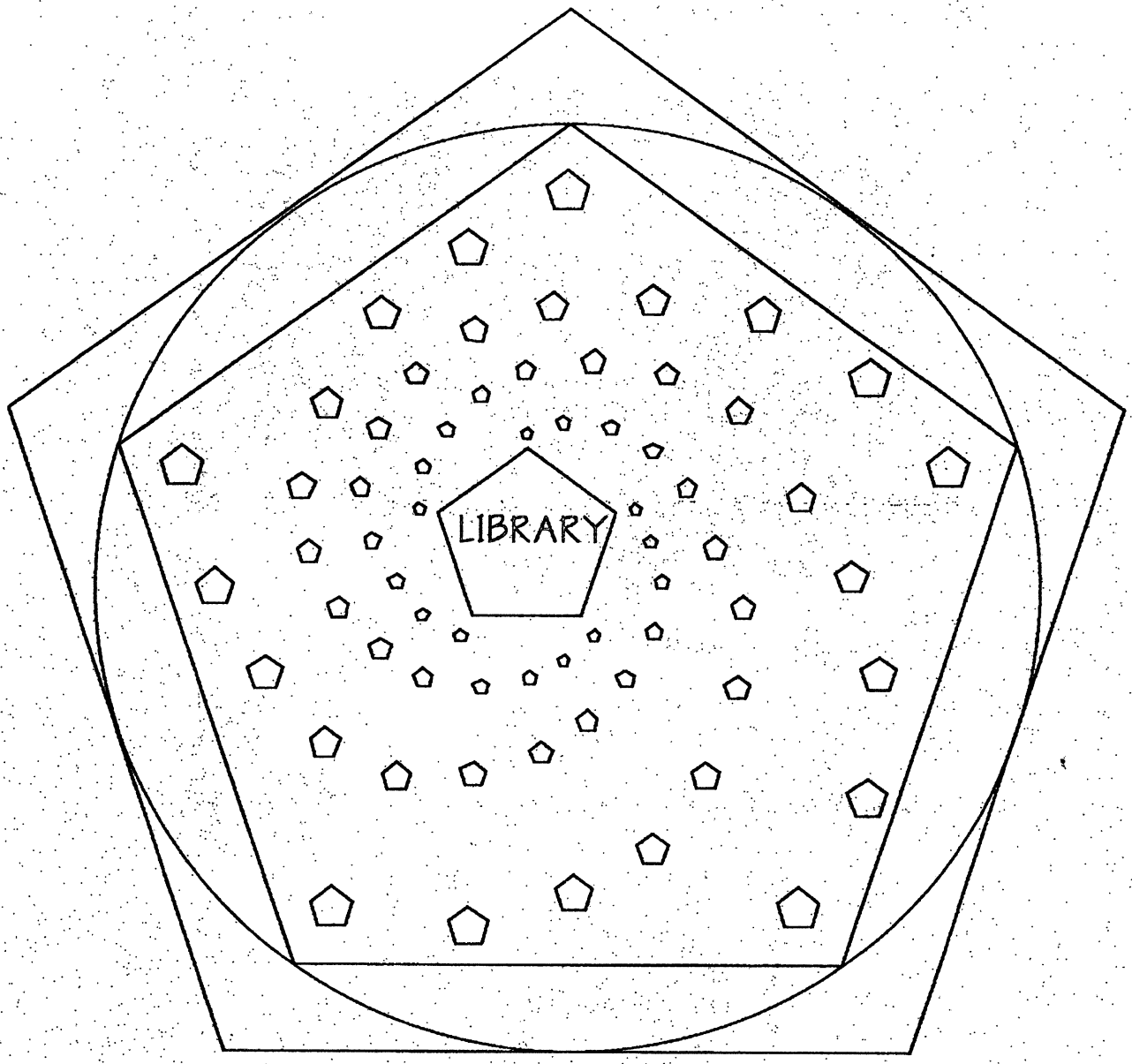
To make it look like a contest, however, your benevolent P&G has cast the prime explanations, in the answers to One of which the truth must lie, into Six Questions. You will play along, affecting to weigh possibilities, but will of course choose the proper Question and write the proper Answer. Questions for determining [*chuckle!*] the Correct WILD OAT will cover the following, well, areas of experience. You will note that all but a few took place in ARXIV or close environs. Note also the uncommon function of the mark "/", which = "and/or".

WILD OAT 1:	The Perilous Picnic [or rather Pyknic] by Hollowood Oak/Twisted Parklet.
WILD OAT 2:	The Misguided Third-Year Outing to the Awful Abbey of Acnanança.
WILD OAT 3:	The Ghastly Gig at Assembly Rock/SlothHouse.
WILD OAT 4:	The Verstummelte Field Trip to Mount Punctilious.
WILD OAT 5:	The Raucous Ramble 'Round the Town.
WILD OAT 6:	The Shattering Misfiling in the Library.

To facilitate your presentation of the facts, a Benevolent Providence has supplied New Map of the town itself *in addition to* only the maps of ARXIV and environs from p. 95 of the Grey Dominance. If all goes well today, you will also receive a new, legible printing of the New Map, good through 1990 RW.

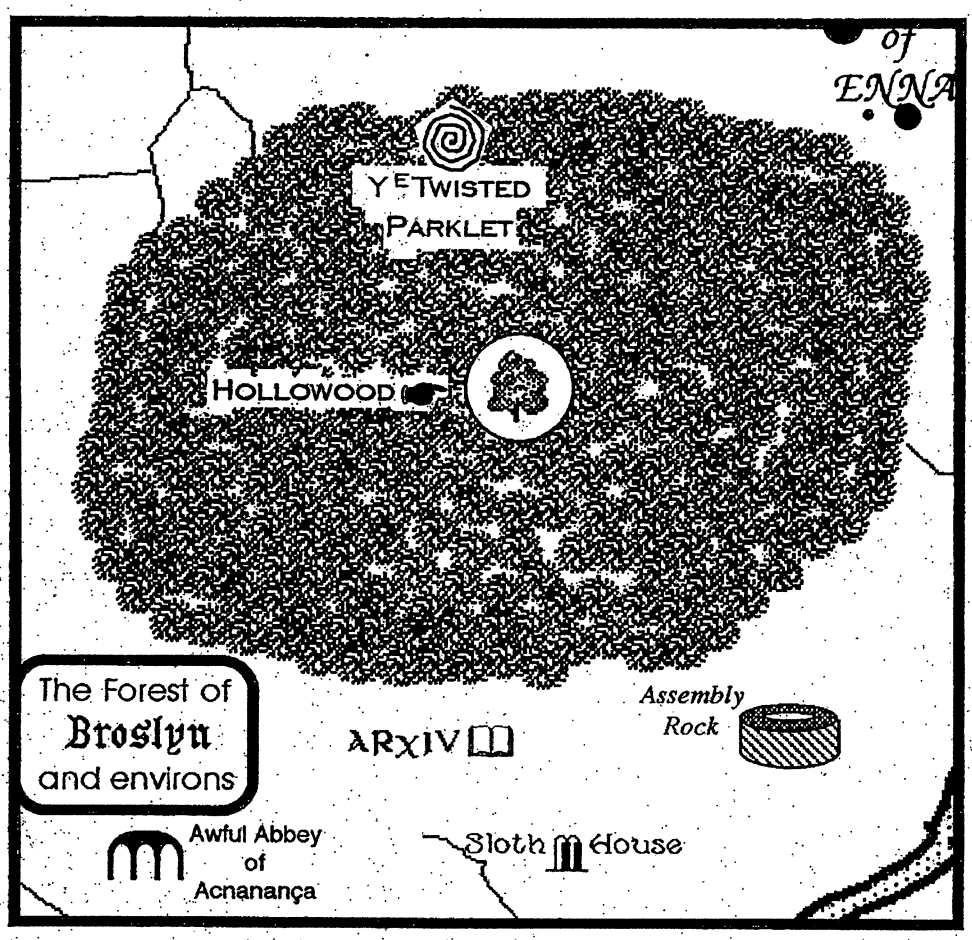
ALSO: You will have observed already that none of the places cited exists in a vacuum; that each found mention somehow, somewhere, in the subsequent history of δsp's sojourn in High Θefarie. How interesting it would be, opines your guide, if later events might have been foreshadowed in the early mishap!

Think. Remember. Come prepared.



APXIV

Scarcely a detailed map; more later...



TURCE MURILA,
dsp

Identification Lists from the Terminal Praxis, 1997

It occurs to Yr P&G, as he starts once again through the Learning Process—for this is how he learns, O Best Belovèd, not from the answers to Questions but by the asking *of* Questions—that he is painting himself into an ever-shrinking corner. This time in particular, the footroom is especially small; will he be able to perform the strenuous pirouettes, arabesques, and high kicks that constitute the Thefarien Fandango without breaking at least a toe as he whirls?

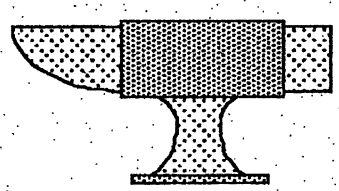
It is not right, it is not fitting, it is not decent. At his age, with his knees and eyes, he should be consolidating, making indexes, putting final touches, designing copyright copy, above all checking references, for/in/to his collected memorabilia and laudandissima. But is he doing that? Is he even *remembering* the joys, the sorrows, the shafts of wit and the shifts of weight, Real World wonders all that summed up his puny passage through his place and time? Ah, no, friends, he is not. He is rather *inventing things to remember* [do recall that we get *invent* from Latin *invenire*, "discover"] about a Someplace Else, an Otherwhere for whose existence you have only his word. Make that *words*. Emerging as you just have from the confines of Oefarien Materials, you may well feel pity and fear at the spectacle: Will you, perchance, in your twilit time, furnish such an exhibition of Wasted Days & Wasted Nights?

You do well to opine in this gloomy fashion, Carissimae/i, for you are even now taking the first, decisive step down that slippery slope to a life of triviality. In putting names and substance to the subsequent *quisquiliae*, the whatevers of NeverWas, in and by that act you shall become as he, a creator of nugatory nonexistentials, a Chosen Chooser of Chaff. Who knows when you may not slide this slope again?

On the other hand, it's not really so bad. *He* may think that he is building and buttressing High Oefarie with basements of stunningly unimportant factoids, but should you? No, I cry, No! Rejoice as you may and can, for as Yr P&G racks brain and tears hair, excogitating yet more lists, more *stuff* to be recalled, the madness is his, not yours. Not really. Of course not. You are merely doing the necessary. Humoring the hooked gaffer in his last pursuit of the rainbow, as it were. Be, I counsel you, detached. Be wryly amused. Be of Good Cheer.

☛ Do not, however, Be of *too much* Cheer. These are, after all, Short Questions, trivial pursuits, and the total time expended on Section A, SubSections 1 and 2, should not exceed One Hour. For heaven's sake, keep a sense of proportion. It's not as though your life depended on this.

Unless, of course, it does...



1: NON-FIVE ANOMALIES, or

A curious title, admittedly. But, as the exception proves the rule, so does this insist, by differing, on the Thefariens' absolute obsession with the number FIVE—V—5—ΩΛΧ—ᚠ. How unlike us, we remark.

And, truth to tell, they were/are different. Our Favorite Numbers are several: We, those of RW Western Europe and America, dote on *Three*, on *Seven*, on *Nine*, on *Ten*, on *Twelve*: For *Threes*, the Trinity, the Estates, the Musketeers, the Kings; for *Sevens*, the Sins, the Virtues, the Hills, the Sisters, the Seas, the Wonders, the Sacraments; for *Nines*, the Worthies, the Muses, the Spheres, the Orders of Angels; for Tens. the Commandments, most improvised Lists and Rankings; for *Twelves*, the Apostles, the Tribes, the Olympian Gods. Eclecticism itself.

There is, of course, the case of the medieval Welsh, who were obsessed with the number *Three* to the point where they saw the world's substrate, the basic configuration of things and people and animals and places, as a series of triads. But this pales before the Thefariens' thoroughgoing fascination with *Five* and *Fiveness*. Myth expressed itself in *Pentads*; houses, towns, signs, and labels were formed in *Pentagons*; the Five Principal Cities—Bolsena, Clusl, Peruç, Enphurli, and Vei—grouped roughly into a *Pentacle* of sorts. Plays followed, by rule, a *Five*-act plot structure. Groups had *Five* members. Battles, Events, Speeches, *every* process had *Five* stages. Rough Reckoning was enshrined in HT's "Hanguide," with its use of the Five Fingers. Was this due to Time, the purely adventitious facts that the Thefarien Cycle contained 5^4 years between madness and madness, and the Round contained five Rounds, or 5^5 years? Or was it due to fingers? But the Thefariens were in this like us: *Five* fingers, but on each of two hands, or of four extremites. Whence came the *Fiveness*? Who can say? But, whatever its source(s), it was absolute...

Well, not quite. The Curious Case of the **Seven** Mavens of Clus has been noted in some detail, if not solved. And the Principal Attractions of the Bowre of Blisse do, without doubt, add up to **Nineteen.**[1] In fact, a look at ᚻΘ *rubrication* (the practice and process of pigeon-holing things) yields amazement in this connection. The Thefariens were *not* as thoroughgoing in quintification as they appear. *Other Numbers* not only occur, but more than casually. Not in profusion, of course, but frequently enough to demand a recasting of our sadly set views on the subject.

And it is the beginnings of that task on which you are to expend your labors here.

Below you will find listed the official names of 12 [TWELVE] Thefarien groupings that do NOT involve the number Five, all experienced by ᚦsp during his time in that most upsetting Otherwhere. These include: Associations, Principles, Processes, Structures, and almost anything else that can be assemble with others of its sort. Choose 3 [THREE] for your knowing treatment. In each case:

1st, explain the name: To who[m] or what does this refer?
2nd, when did this occur/have importance/impinge upon ᚻᛁᚷᚻ Θᛖᚠᛁᚱᛁᛖ?
3rd, where precisely was it found, or did it occur, [Be painfully accurate].
4th, what was its importance for ᚦsp?

☛ NB: For least ONE [1] of your three choices, attempt to explain the anomaly, the rise of *non-Fiveness* in a country that obviously worshipped *Quintessence*.

1. The Three Waves of Snollygosters
2. The Eight Ways to Pleasure
3. The Nine True Bargains
4. The Eleven Days of Yearend
5. The Four-&-Twenty BlockBards
6. NineTower Retreat
7. Seven and One-half Ways to kill a ᛇΛÇΩΛᛇ
8. Seventeen Doors to Dangley Dale
9. The Twenty-Three Paths from Enphurli
10. The Thirteen Sins of Omission
11. The Quadruple Quorum
12. The Triple Inquisition

[1] Let it be duly noted here that the Nineteen here was not official, but an analysis by Dsp, who (a) had read Spenser's *Faerye Queene*, Book II, Canto 12, and (b) loved prime numbers. But *Five* is a prime, if a small one, and Dsp's work on BAROK is, well, *riddled* with *Fiveness*. There may well have been Nineteen Points at the Bowre before Dsp set his eye to it.

2: INFORMATIVE SCARIFICATION[2]

See HT 32.6 [Grey Dominance, p. 64]

We Earthlings, even the most rationally raised of us, are great ones for adorning the integument, decorating the skin. We pierce, we punch, we stipple, we paint, we stretch, we cut, we sew, we appliqué, all to show our world, or some part of it, something about us, or some part of *us*. We are sexy, we are rebels, we love Mother, we love Texas, we love Elvis, we love our bikes, we fight for L-O-V-E and H-A-T-E even-handedly.

In our technologically advanced societies, of course, Class rules style, with the general principle being that: impermanent decoration may declare itself, but permanent decoration must be concealed somehow, or else risk demotion-in-status. The successful face-lift does not display its scars, and strives for the "natural look"; the irremoveable tattoo, unless relegated to a normally arcane section of the anatomy, becomes to the well-bred observer, *Low* in the extreme. Outside. Other.

Indeed, the tattooed themselves, to use this as a general term for irreversible skin-alteration, view the phenomenon in rather the same way: Their deliberate flaunting of the non-natural does declare that they opt, often violently, out of approved ranking, and flip the bird to show their joy and pride in being not as the great washed are. There is a basic contradiction here, quite clearly: The tattooed, by exercising that excluding option, may depart polite society, but by the same token, they display their membership in another culture—sub-, if you will, but a culture nevertheless.

And the woman with the face-lift, come to think of it: Does she want the process absolutely dark? Certainly not. She wishes to declare her membership, too—in another sub-culture which she regards as super-: The svelte, the soigné, the *rich*. To her closest friends in that group, super-s all, she will confide the hideous horrors of butchery and recovery, she will touch on the staggering *price* of the process. And, to cap the recital, she may push back her hair, lingeringly but firmly, and disclose:

THE SCAR . . .
In Thefarien: ᑭᕮÇᖶᒪ

All in all, the tattooed and the uplifted are not too different from each other. Nor [to effect this transition, which has been screaming to be let in for the last 3 paragraphs] from the inhabitants of High Thefarie in the last years of XV. Admittedly, details vary, methods differ, but the principle is fundamentally the same. As I wrote long ago: *The Objectification of Status*...to which I would now add, *The Declaration of Attitude*. In any case, Thefariens, at least those of rank, delighted in *obvious display of* The Scar, which provided manifest, acceptable, *physical* statement of their status/attitude/ essential being. The Scar, by the way, was nothing trivial. Augmented by surgery both deft and gross, it fairly shouted aloud what removals had so expensively been removed from the unseen underneath: "I'm able to *pay* for this, and all that it entails!"

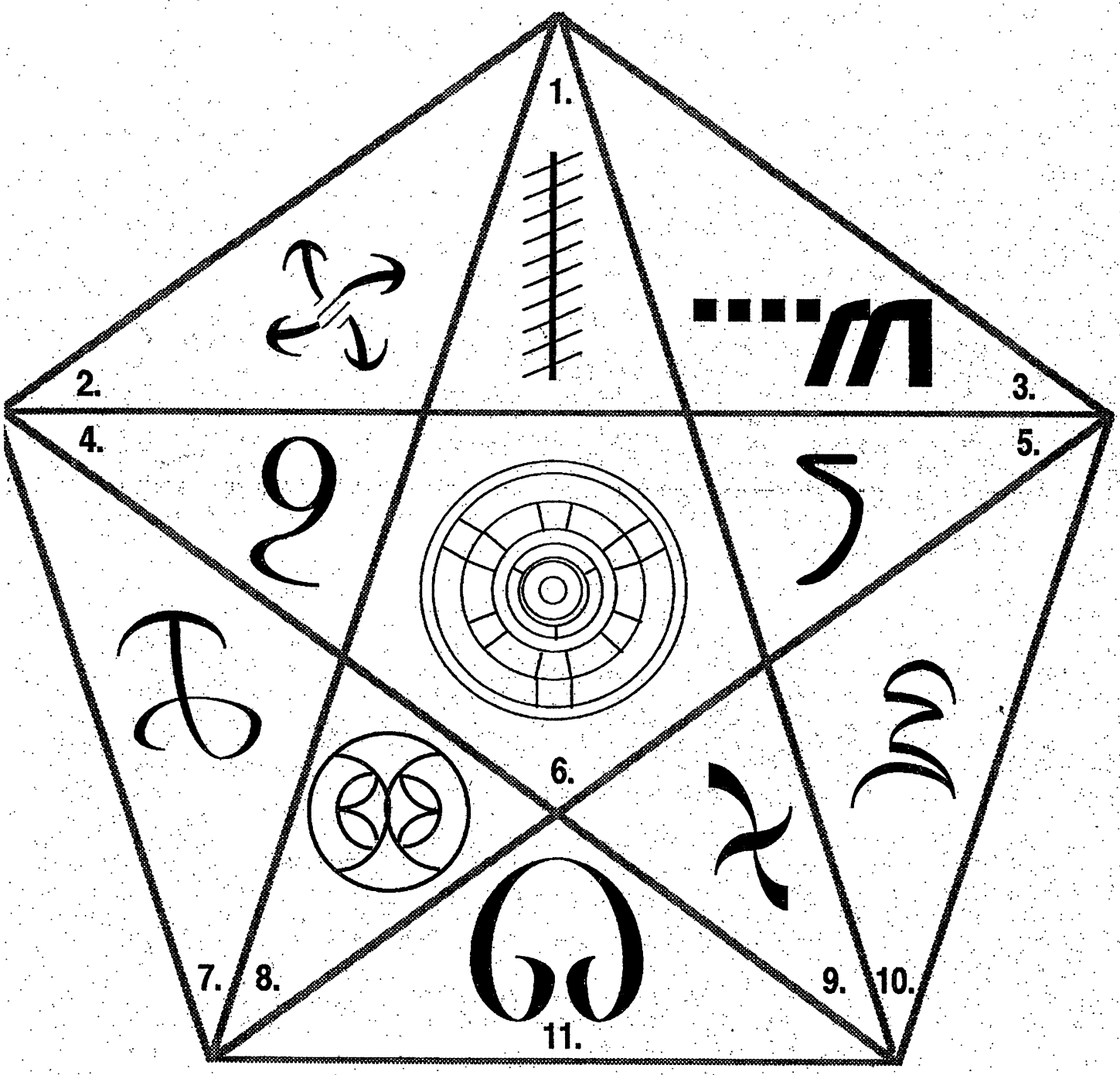
A dangerous innovation, in the last frenzied quinquennium before *Cyclend/RoundOff*, was the use of *Scars* to furnish and flaunt other information than the results of unnecessary surgery...though it must be pointed out that, nearly a half-century before, Eniaca Omniversant had undergone the process, keeping the result, however, well *under wraps* until the proper time came. As ᑯᔕᑭ was witness. It changed his life.

Of course, given his age in the year 575, most things changed his life. But Eniaca's ᑭᕮÇᖶᒪ was special. And repercussive in the extreme.

> On the next page, you will find a collection of 11 (ELEVEN) *Scars*, ten of them by no means uncommon, and one very idiosyncratic, encountered by ᑯᔕᑭ during his Thefarien stay. Choose 3 [THREE] for treatment. For each, give:
>
> 1st, the name and location [on the body] of the Scar, at least as usually worn.
> 2nd, the significane of the Scar, the specific points made by the "wearer".
> 3rd, at least one important viewing of this star by ᑯᔕᑭ; where [in ᑲᕮ] seen, when seen, to what end seen?
>
> ☛ NB: At least ONE [1] of your three choices must be the highly unusual *Scar* worn—if that is the word—by Eniaca, and first disclosed to ᑯᔕᑭ during the hectic events of Yearend, XV/575. How had she got it? Why was it placed where it was? Why did she let ᑯᔕᑭ see it?

---

[2] This question is, in essence, an extension and modification of Long-Question VI from the *Terminal Praxis* of 1986, which has long been a thorn is Dsp's side, given that *no one* elected to answer it that distant December day. He has thought that sufficient gussying-up, the addition of illustrations, and the *requirement* that all attempt it, he might get some sort of feedback on this rather disturbing facet of Thefarien culture.



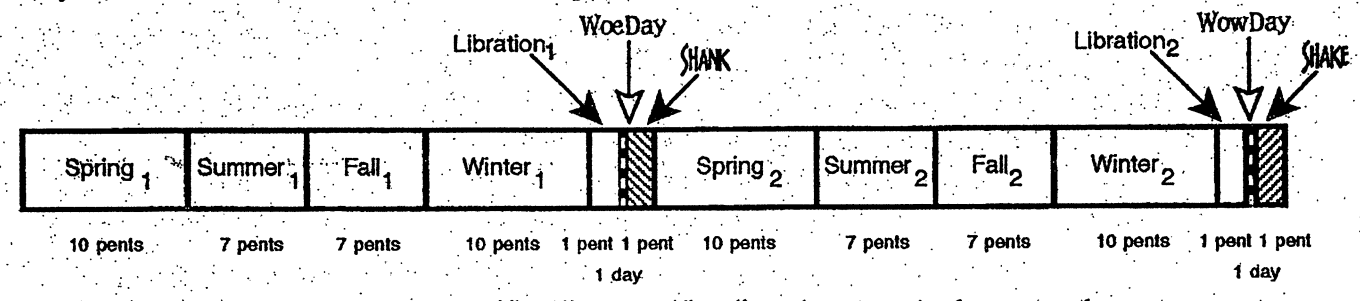
A Selection of Theparien Informative Cosmetic Scars

Longe Questiouns
from the Terminal Praxis, 1997

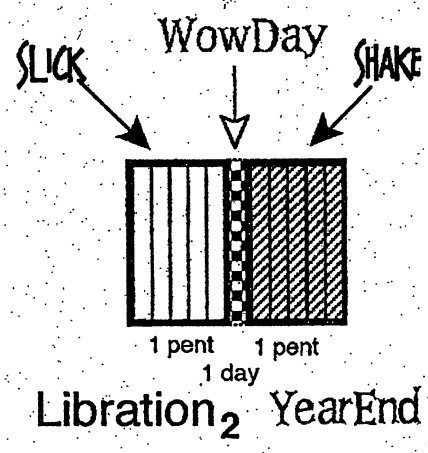
The Six (!) Wild Oats of YearEnd, XV/575

YearEnd comes around, goes around, comes around again. Always. Except at Cyclend and Roundoff, when Time goes mad. But we are looking back now at a simpler, happier time, when things seemed stable, and the End of Everything was yet a long ways off...

First, however, let me correct a more or less trivial error, established in the diagram in HT 20, on p. 28 of the Grey Dominance, that concludes the "Second Attempt [at Order]." It runs, roughly, thus:



The impression given by the presentation of Libration$_1$ and Libration$_2$ is wrong. As the text on that page states, the Librations consist of "2 pents and one day...or, better, 1 pent, 1 day, and 1 pent...or, in toto, 11 days." "Libration," to be accurate, is the name to each of the brief periods that occur at the year's middle ["Libration$_1$" or YearMid] and end ["Libration$_2$" or YearEnd]. The first, lament-preparatory pent of YearMid was known, not as Libration$_1$, but as SLACK; the second, celebration-preparatory pent of YearEnd was known as SLICK. Libration$_2$, with which we are concerned here, thus took on the following configuration:



In ARXIV, where dsp was a near 3rd-year student in World-Building, aged 20 years in some world or other, it is to be feared that hormones and pheronomes (or their analogic equivalents) combined with towering energy levels to produce, not just a single WowDay of frenzy, but a brimming eleven, full to the gunwales and slopping over. Away with preparatory cerebration—on with compensatory Celebration! And Celebrate they did. By the end of SLICK, the neat college town was shambles incarnate (or do I mean *carnate*? certainly *carnal* would apply), learning had taken a disabling left cross to the chops, and dsp's reputation as a promising scholar, even as one who might well bring honor to the side in the creative entrepreneurship that is WorldBuilding...this lay in ruins. He had not, he would protest later at the trial in 578 when he sued for his degree, indulged more than others in, well, in any excess one might name, he had merely had an unbelievable run of foul luck. The Adjutors agreed, and he won, but the same

body added in a note to the preceptor that plaintiff's inadvertence seemed to have been incredible in its scope, and that they would have put the whole affair down to stupidity had it not been flatly impossible for *anyone*, even an outlander, to be so completely devoid of perceptiveness.

What, precisely, had brought this lamentable state of affairs about, had reduced Dsp from Bright Hope to Wretched Timeserver? Not even the Adjutors could establish Prime Cause, though they strove mightily. There were six (6) events, hereinafter known as Wild Oats, that vied for the title, distributed as follows:

SLICK, Oneday: First Oat: The Near-Thirds went for an unscheduled outing [strange term] at the Awful Abbey of Acnanança.

SLICK, Fourday: Second Oat: Dsp conveyed his new friend, Eniaca Omniversant, to Hollowood Oak in the Forest of Broslyn, a popular trysting spot, for a Pyknic.

WowDay, morning: Third Oat: The GoudaBoots, a Progressive [later *Re*gressive] Urban group, with which Dsp blew mectub, played a dawn gig at Assembly Rock.

WowDay, evening: Fourth Oat: Returned (barely) to ARXIV, Dsp somehow managed to join a traditional howlhike, the Raucous Ramble Round the Town.

SHAKE, Threeday: Fifth Oat: Some of the more earnest students of surfacce phenomena, Dsp among them, organize a Field Trip to the currently extinct Volcano, Mt. Punctilious.

SHAKE, Fiveday: Sixth Oat: Surveying the wreckage of his YearEnd, Dsp returned to his library job in an attempt to show, somehow, the goodness of his intentions, and began reshelving the *Arcana Sanctissima.*

Disasters all, without exception. But which was *The One*? Which was it that pushed Dsp over the edge into the *non-grata* state, and effectively put paid to his prospects? You, of course, with your detailed knowledge of the inner and outer workings of each Oat, are quite certain. Further, you know the places backwards and forwards.

Therefore, oh best beloved, you are now to commence the Long Questioun. Pick the correct item, the Wild Oat that led to Dsp's ruin and discourse on it according to specifications. Use the proper blank diagram supplied to show *just* what happened. **NB:** To whatever event you elect, append a paragraph explaining the primacy of this event: why it, and none other, is the Principal Cause of the Abomination of Desolation.

I. The *Outing*, of course, had done him in, the Outing to the Awful Abbey of Acnanança, though it must be emphasized that the Near-Thirds had had no intention of going to the Abbey. Acnanança was an obscure god, but his savagery was no secret. Nor were the somewhat disgusting and frightening habits of his *nunks.*[1] The original destination of the festive group was, rather, the year-long festive habitation of the rusticated roués of the area, the "SlothHouse," often termed a "retirement home", though the tosspots and ne'erdowells that lived there never seemed to retire at all. The Near-Thirds, bent on coarse badinage and camaraderie, took a wrong turn and slammed into the Abbey...and the rest is somewhat ugly history.

> Delineate the series of sad events in the Awful Abbey of Acnanança that led to the downfall of the Near-Third students and the utter obliteration of Dsp's reputation. Account, if you can—and of course you can—for the special savagery wrought on him, and comment on the special nastiness of providence in supplying an ex-dean of world-building as resident canon of the place. Give a brief overview of the place and its inhabitants, and show the progress of the contention on the diagram supplied.

II. Pyknics, of course, aim at a sort of rustic innocence far removed from the seamy story that got back to the bloody Deans from the Forest. Was it genuine ignorance of the terrain that led Dsp to lead Eniaca *through* the Forest of Broslyn, not to the Hollowood Oak (to which, as he was not to learn for years, he was genuinely *allied*), but to the dangerous precincts of the Maze in the Twisted Parklet, beset as it was with dangerous elementals, springes, and traps for the unwary. But why should these perils have brought reproach on *him*? And why didn't Eniaca, a native of the region, warn him?

---

[1] *Nunks* = a portmanteau word from *nuns* and *monks*, economically doing for the population of that fell locale, which was an equal-opportunity Abbey.

Delineate the two parts of the Pyknic—the trudge through Broslyn Forest that missed the Oak, and the woeful wander through the Maze—but concentrate on the dangers of the latter place, which of course arise from its hideous origins (delineate these, too). Place Guilt: was the Disaster ðsp's fault? How could any Adjutor or Dean even think so? Assess, if you can, the role of Eniaca in all this—though your omniscience may prove no match for her cunning: given that she married Dsp for the first time not too long after, what malevolence might have prompted her obvious role in the affair? Indicate the maze-dangers on the supplied map.

III. ðsp, The GoudaBoots, of course, had never played at Assembly Rock before. They may also have been misled by the standard map of those days, which depicted the venue as that

Assembly Rock

rather than this:

Assembly Rock

This may have accounted for the misplacement of the Group, the subsequent catastrophe, the anger of the potential fans, and even the musical selections that so infuriated Deans and Crowd alike. But why was ðsp, newest member of the group, blamed? And why was the outcome so vicious?

Show the *physical* causes of troubles on the diagram of Assembly Rock, and indicate the hideous results there, too. In your historical narrative, comment on the effects of the music. Is it just possible that Dsp's inexperience on his instrument may have led to the utter ruin? And...was that Eniaca in the wings?

IV. Riots, of course, are cooperative affairs. The input of each rioter into a grand fracas is proportionately quite small, when it is compared to the terror and destruction of the whole? How, then, did ðsp receive the lion's, and the elephant's, and even the whale's share of the blame?

Trace the Ramble/Riot, delineate the destruction on the map of ΛRχIV, name the buildings reduced to flinders and the order of their destruction, and estimate the damage to the town over the next forty years. Can it all be put down to the misprision of one red flag?

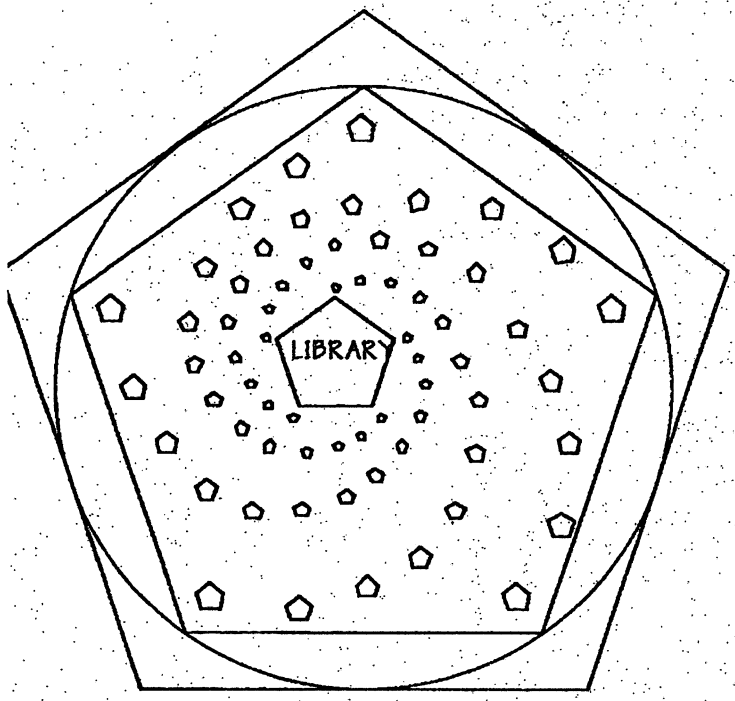
V. Volcanoes, of course, are their own masters. They blow or lie still as they will, and we can do nothing about it. Except, it would seem, ðsp, who seems, in that long-ago YearEnd, to have brought about a general catastrophe of really

Trace, on the map of Punctilious, the progress upward, and the series of small mishaps that led, ultimately, to ðsp's denigration. Comment on the wide-reaching effects of the eruption, and the subsequent deposit of ash. Accout, if you can, for the charge of guilt levelled at our Hero, innocent as he was, and is, of geology.

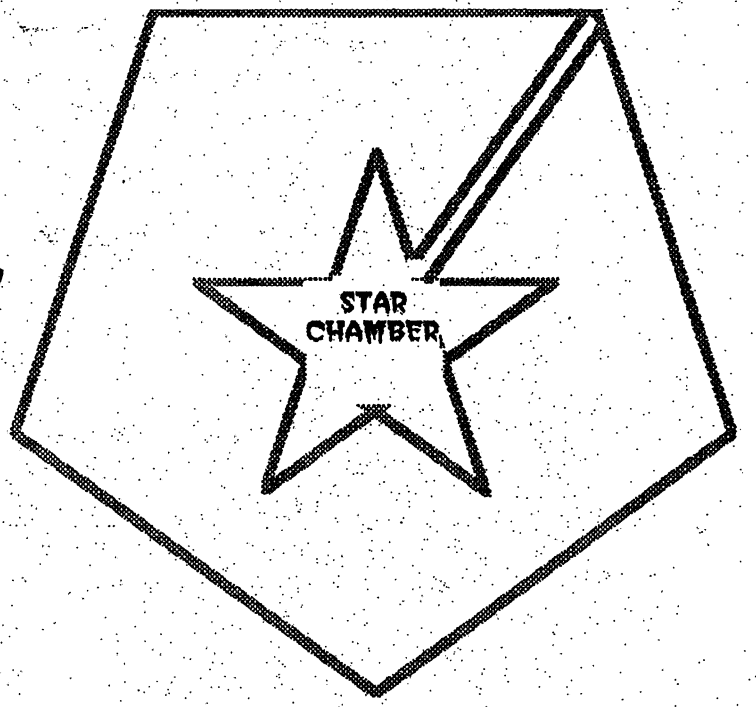
VI. The *Arcana Sanctissima*, of course, should not have been reshelved. YearOn was about to arrive, and the Nunks of Ananança had put in a special request for these holy, if startlingly illustrated, documents. Nor did it help that the exhausted ðsp had put them in the place reserved for the Library's most curious texts, and shifted said steamy to the vacated religious shelves. Why he did this, who knows? But the mild religious war that broke out in the "SouthEast" certainly had other and more gripping causes.

Annotate the chart of the Basement Stacks of the ΛRχIV Library very carefully, indicating the right and wrong locations, not just for the texts in question, but for the rest of the basement's books, which had been in ðsp's charge. Reproduce the letter from the Awful Abbot of the Awful Abbey to the Dean, and try, oh try, to assign the responsibility for the chaos in the stacks and its effects. Do not forget the possible role of Eniaca, who was reported in the basement on several occasions during YearEnd.

Maps for use in Longe Questiouns [reduced]:

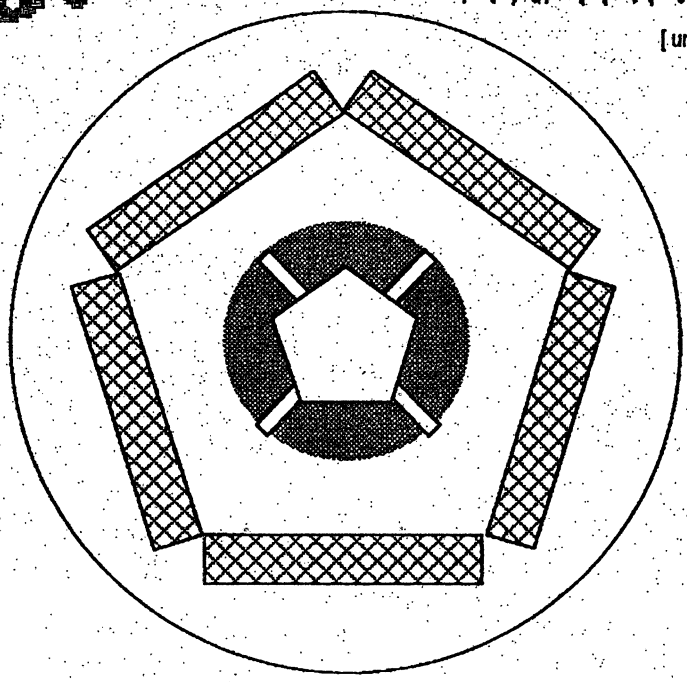


ARXIV



THE AWFUL ABBEY

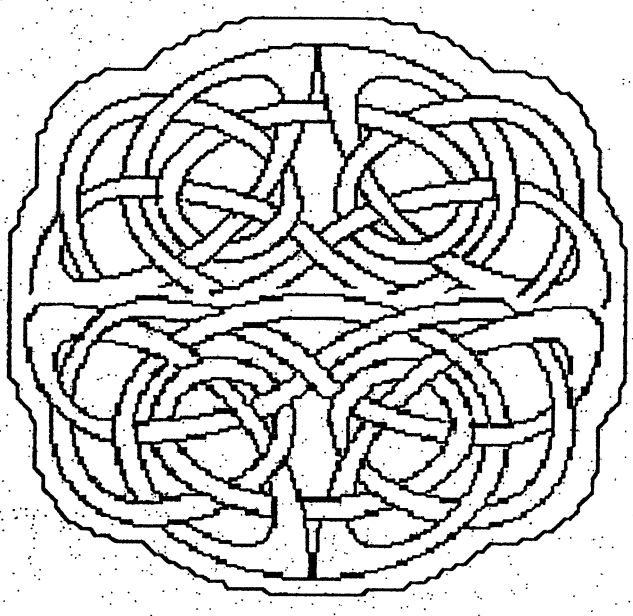
[undetailed]



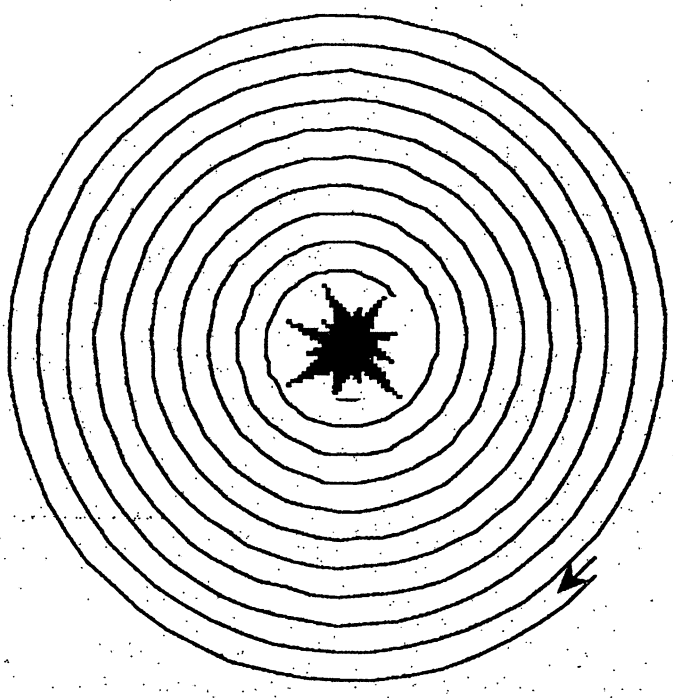
BANDYARD atop

ASSEMBLY ROCK

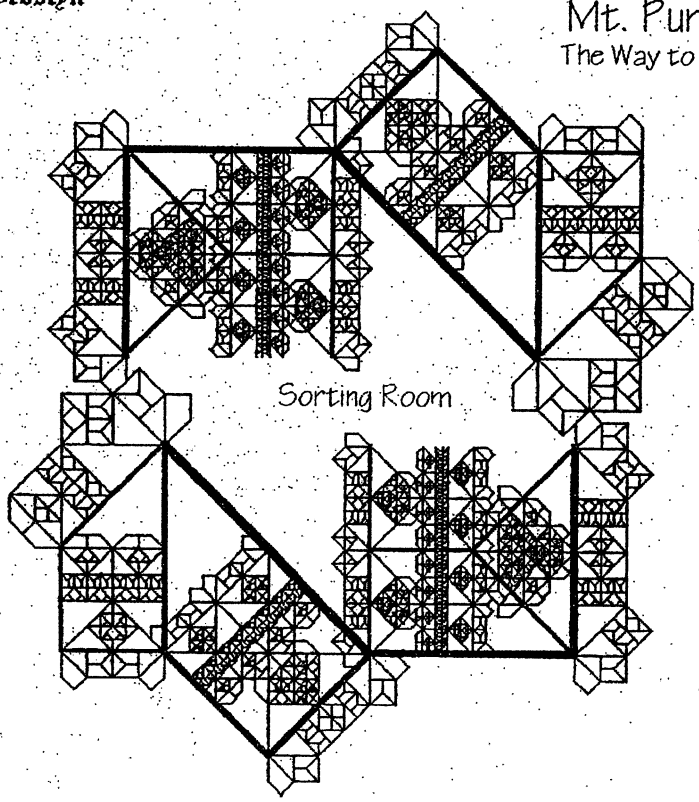
More Maps for use in Longe Questiouns [reduced]:



The MAZE in
Ye Twisted Parklet
Forest of Broslyn



Mt. Punctilious
The Way to the Crater



Basement Stacks
The Library, ARXIV

PostFace
to Version 9.8
(or whatever)

I should apologize for this, and so I do. To palliate your hassles, I put this Table of Contents at the utter end: At least you can *find* the wretched thing.[1]

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLE OF CONTENTS

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The real difficulty in this supplement is to be found, or rather not found, in its complete absence from the Tentative Chronology on pp. ix-xiii, which is the only device for bring Reason and Order to the gallimaufry which you now hold. Let me give you some aid: WINDOWM/RUIN (HT 70 and 72), with its attendant madness, including dsp's hectic, strangulated trip to Mt. Turnaround, occurred in those last mad days of XV 625, after the Awakening of the Dead but before the epochal Battle of Turnaround (see p. 213). And the WILD OATS (HT 73 and 75) were sown, with a vengeance, way back at the YearEnd of 575 (see pp. 233-4). The Roads & Labels of HT 71 and the Anomalies & Scars of HT 74 involve, *as given*, no particularities of dating. This may help.

One other bit of unnecessary confusion.[2] The Maze-Poem on p. 221 has yielded to the inadequacies of the puritanical printer that I am forced to use, and rendered its words illegible to a factor of, say, 85%. I cannot discover a legible hard copy, and so here present a transcription of the piece, its changes of direction indicated by slashes:

> *And off I set in / flight from what/ever it / might be that was lur/king there in the midst of whatever this place / might happen to be. I was fairly sure that it wasn't / Mt. Turnaround—not that I'd seen the place, but I / had gathered from pictures that it was / quite high, while / the / looming mound / that I had so incautiously entered was really, as / mountains go, less than squat. In fact, the further that I peremeated, / the less it appeared to be a natural structure at all. There was / the color, for one thing: the blueness nearly over- / powered my torch. And the / corners / were / much / too sharp and smooth to occur in / too sharp and smooth to occur in / nature. I was proceeding, after some hairpin turns, down a / series of long sections that seemed to slide off from each other, ra- / ther than break violently away, when I first heard the hooting. It was / faint but unmistakably horrid, as if something in the / inner depths of this el- / dritch structure / were licking its chops at the prospect of imminent / supper. There was a liquid quality to those / hoots that I didn't like one bit. The passages / had become shorter between turns, and / very suddenly I made a / very violent / swerve and then / [the] path changed off in the / opposite direction. / opposite direction. / The hooting was / by / now / much louder. It / sounded hungrier, too. Was it / just past the next turn? Well, / no, it wasn't, but I knew / that / wasn't / it / far ahead. I knew somehow that / I was running out of room. I have no / idea why I didn't turn back and race / for the long-ago entrance, / but I kept on, / grimly pushing my / [???] down the last / jerky twists, / until the / path ended, / and / I debouched / into the / den and / beheld / —oh / god— / IT*

All this should/may/might-possibly help a tad. Honestly, I wish you well.

TURCE MURILA,

12 April 1998 dsp

---

[1] There's another reason, as always. If I put PostFace here at the end, my job in assembling Version 10.0, the final word on High Thefarie, will be made measurably easier this coming summer. But let me bask for the moment in the illusion of dedicated Altruism. Or maybe Guilt — they come to the same thing.

[2] To be distinguished, of course, from *necessary* confusion, in which this text abounds.

from the PRELIMINARY STATEMENT on the Terminal Praxis, 1998

Tense Time. Poised at the End of the Line. Or rather the End of the Rope. In earlier years, Your P & G might have been frenzied, but he was also exhilarated. This was *The End*, but he knew that there would be more, and he found himself eager to go through the process of ἀνάμνησις, of recollection, knowing that high Thefarie would grow, and develop new twists and tangles, things to be solved at the next time. But this year is different. This year, the End is *really* an End. After this year, no more.[1]

And so, with a heavy heart, I put the Rope around my neck, and attack the business at hand. Finishing is such sweet sorrow...but hardly when there's no tomorrow. Sob.

To our muttons:

NOTICE!!!

Ever solicitous of your welfare, Your Preceptor & Guide herewith pronounces, officially, the Eff-Cee, or FATAL COMMITMENT. The Long Questions, at least, in this year's TERMINAL PRAXIS will treat:

DWINDLEDOWN & ENDGAME

Which is to say, the process of dissolution attendant upon YearEnd 625, or more accurately YearEnd XV/625, or most accurately YearEnd Γ/XV/625 — the conclusion of the 625th Year of the Fifteenth Cycle of the Third Round, which is to say, the end of Year and Cycle and Round.[2] The Big One. Nothing so huge has/had happened in more than 3,000 years. Civilization-As-They-Know/Knew-It wiped from the slate. New beginning, and all that, for a populace with only the foggiest idea of anything that had gone before. Life would suddenly be Cataclysm; high Θefarie's Culture would lie in ruins...and *such* ruins! Barely comprehensible, even to those savants who, knowing that the Time of Extreme Purgation was at hand, had hidden themselves away behind walls of books, documents that duly set forth everything that could be described about high Θefarie...only to find, or rather not to find, the fact: that only broad outlines could be recalled, that dyslexia's onset had been shattering, and that the precious documents would take more than three centuries to be fully understood. Three centuries during which Time refused to be marked, and Culture and Civilization wobbled on in new directions, reinventing themselves.

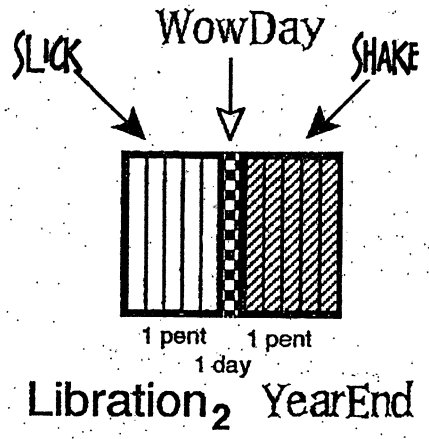
But we rush ahead of ourselves. δsp never saw/sees that Timorous New World, the world of Δ/XVI/1, and thus we have no knowledge of it, only analogies from former cataclysms, which are very spotty. Subsequent Thefarien history will not be our concern. We shall rather turn to the last moments of the high Θefarie he knew, to Libration$_2$ of XV/625, the last eleven days of his sojurn in the place, as it prepared for, grappled with, and reeled

[1] Well, perhaps just a bit. Pulling things together, and correcting typos in the coming Summer...for whatever purpose, I have no idea. Oh, the text will be around next time through. But nothing *new*. Not really.

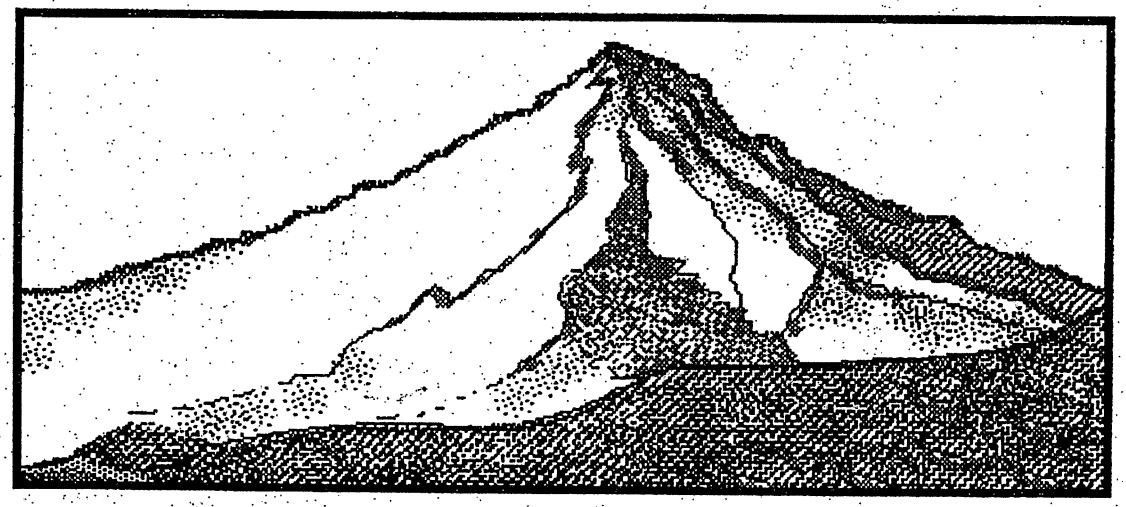
[2] Reminder: The detailed explanation of this time sequence is to be found above in this book in HT 20, pp. 27-30.

from Its End.

Let it here be said, then: The Long Questiouns of the TERMINAL PRAXIS for 1998 will delve into the EndGame, the final playing out. You recall the basic Libration$_2$, or YearEnd:



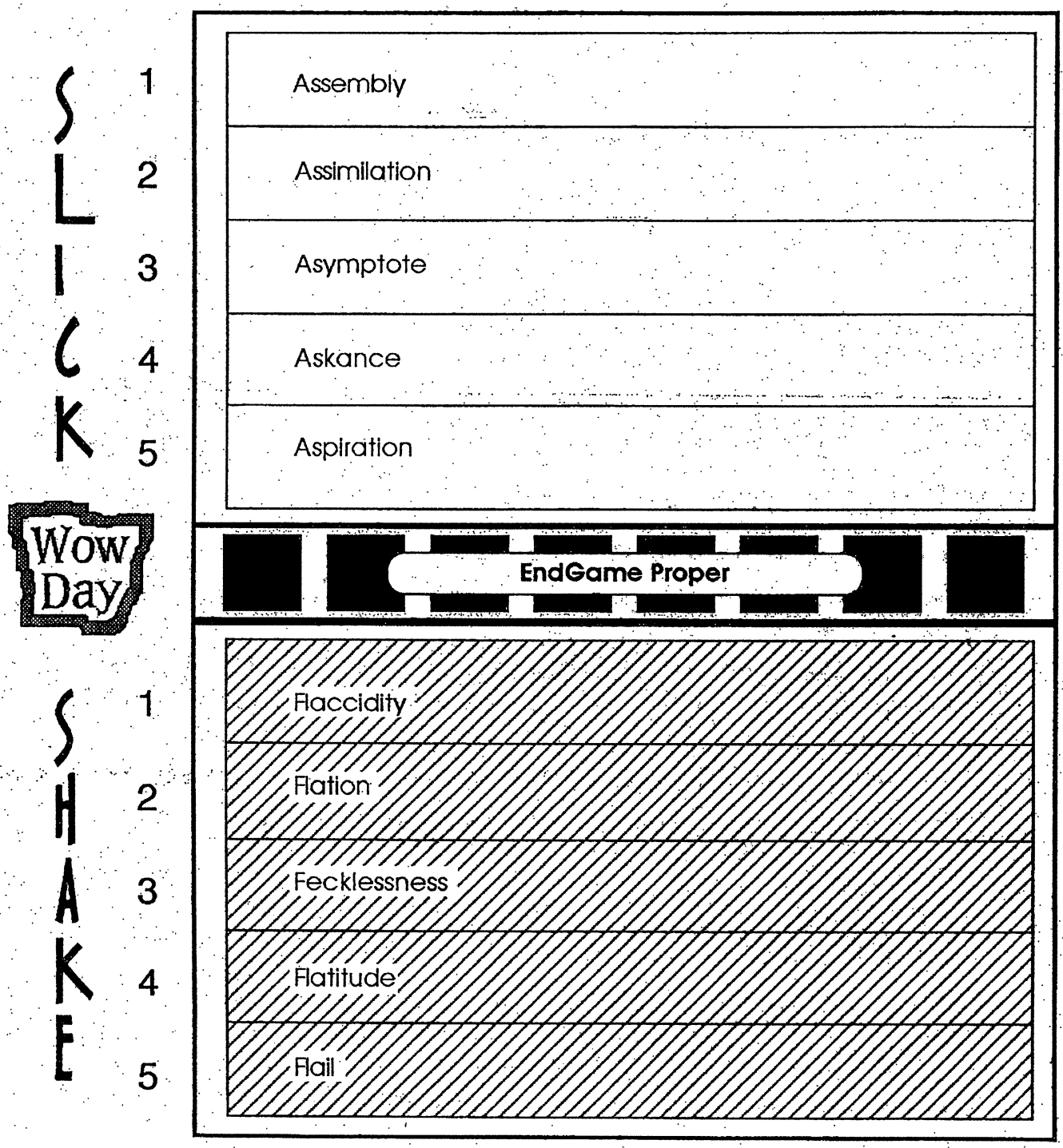
In XV/625, these eleven days were host to DwindleDown, the (temporary) ending of the world, the process of EndGame that brought high Θefarie to a new beginning. It took place, of course, by Mt. Turnaround:



How could that Mountain perform its EndGame function, that of *turning around*? Well, hT is a strange place. But all will be revealed as you go through the process yourself, as you answer your choice of Six Questions that will deal with the spate of invasions and the like, the rigorously regulated chaos that constituted the ritual. To prepare your memory for its tense testing at the TERMINAL PRAXIS, you will do well to recall that EndGame was also a celebration, and that the Thefarien mindset for celebrations was somewhat peculiar:

> Carnival, of course, even in our hypertrophically restrictive society, is a time for Breaking Loose, for casting off momentarily those shackles which bind us together. . . as the authorities at such focuses of fun as South Padre Island have yearly cause to lament. High Thefariens, however, differed from us in this as in much: The regular recurrence of an equinox or solstice in High Thefarie brought forth festivals, of course, especially among this ritual-ridden people, but such frenzied gatherings signalled no relaxation of Plan or Pattern; they merely, during the specified period, changed the labyrinthine rules they lived by for another set. And this adoption of a different rigor was not felt to be change; merely *intensification* of certain latent aspects of the normal, everyday Ways. The simple shopgirl on holiday might appear, to the uninstructed observer, to be abandoning all trammels as she writhed and flopped rhythmically in a deep wallow of warm mud. . . but that wallow was the wallow [in a reproduction, of course] of a Titled Princess of the Realm, and the shopgirl's every slide and splash was governed by tradition. Woe betide that uninstructed observer if, forgetting this point, he decided to profit by Chaos and jumped in beside her. . . as, strangely enough, occurred in the case of δsp at the General Bountification, Art Exhibit, and Communal Slosh near Vçen in Summer$_2$, 588.

Don't worry about the Slosh, but grasp the principle.
Study, too, δsp's first-person account of his WowDay gig in hT 21, "High Note," pp. 30-32 above.
Analyze the ins and outs of the following schedule for EndGame:



SLICK	1	Assembly
	2	Assimilation
	3	Asymptote
	4	Askance
	5	Aspiration
Wow Day		EndGame Proper
SHAKE	1	Flaccidity
	2	Flation
	3	Fecklessness
	4	Flatitude
	5	Flail

YET MORE on DWINDLEDOWN AND ENDGAME from the POST-PRELIMINARY STATEMENT on the Terminal Praxis, 1998

¡ Memory Joggers !

You know it all. And I know you know it all. And you know I know you know it all. And I know...

Heady stuff, really. A Theory of Thefarien Knowledge that embraces Omniscience. *Your* Omniscience. Whose else? [or do I mean Who Else's?] But, let us admit it, the pressures of time on a Terminal Praxis are considerable. And *Retrieval* of your Omniscience might just become a problem. After all, One — which is to say *You* — must call everything relevant to One's finger's ends[3] in a very short period. It has therefore occurred to Your P&G that your meditations might be facilitated by further foregrounding of points that just might be relevant to the case at hand. Hence the following 10 items.

1. The *Battle* of Turnaround, ushering in Libration$_2$ of XV/625, concluded a pent before the Mountain revolved.

2. The Sixth Marriage seriously compromised dsp's standing as SAUÇANT, or Savior.. Only a last-minute NÇAX, or Purgation, preserved the (rather reduced) Sum of Things.

3. There were five invasions attendant upon ENDGAME, but they did not all occur during Libration$_2$. The Snollygosters, who traditionally arrived on Assimilation (that is, Twoday of SLICK), had come a decade and more before, during the opening of DARON...but they made up for it.

4. Mt. Turnaround, like too many other hT mountains, was hollow. It was not, however, *empty*.

5. Here, in order of occurrence, are the principal events of WowDay during ENDGAME XV/625:
   a. Accumulation
   b. Simulation
   c. Vilification
   d. Montiversation
   e. High Note
   f. The Drop

6. The accounts of other ENDGAMES are lost in the mists of cyclic time, and no real comparison is possible between XV and others. But it can be inferred, simply from the high chaos-quotient of the proceedings, that dsp's ENDGAME must have been the clumsiest of all. *Nothing* went right.

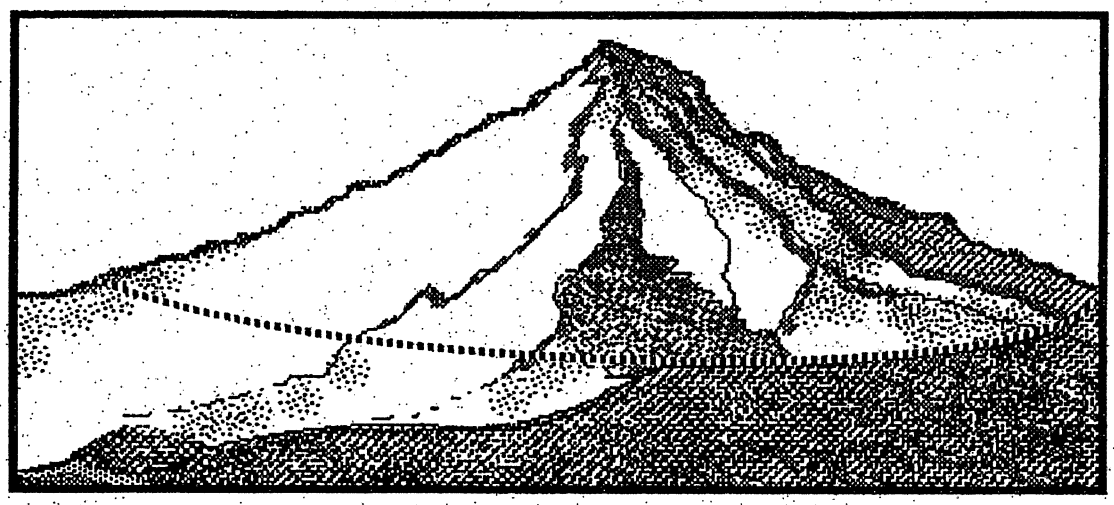
7. The Six Questions will be distributed as follows over the eleven days of Libration$_2$ of XV/625:

SLICK:	One (1)
WowDay:	Three (3)
SHAKE:	One (1)

[3] Or one's forebrain. Somewhere around there.

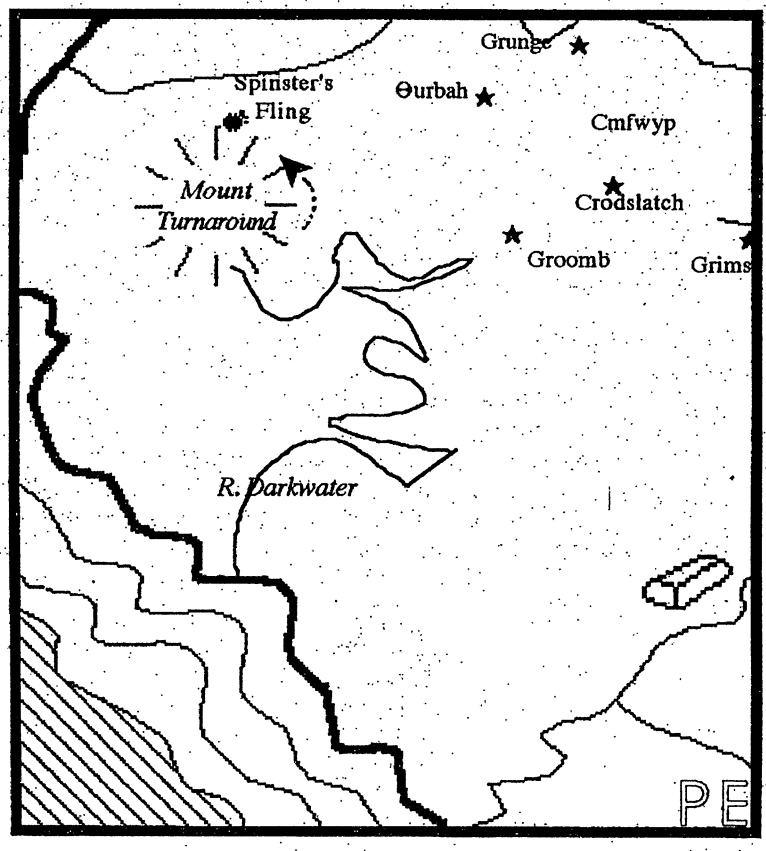
Bottom Line: One (1)

8. How Mt. Turnaround moved may be gathered from this revised depiction:



But the principal question is not *How*, but *Why*.

9. A sketchy map of the area in question will show the curious River Darkwater, which has somehow managed to escape previous delineations. Strange, since this river is not only large, but figured prominently in the events of EndGame.

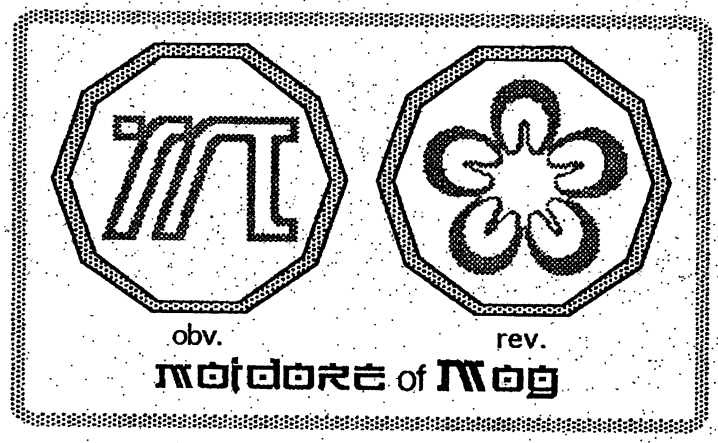


10. The problem of *memory*, which has occupied us in the study of high Thefarie, is no more involved than that of *forgetting*. Remember *Forgetting*; it is, in a way, your Friend...as am I.

Identification Lists from the Terminal Praxis, 1998

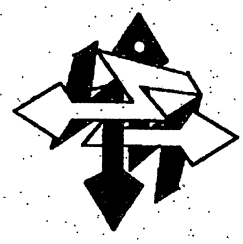
1: COINS, or ÇATA VRTI SCROÇAU RESCI

["I hate to take your money..."]



The occasional reader of these pages may already have encountered the item immediately above, the Moidore of the City of Mog, in the account of Eniaca's death[3] at the Sesquiquinquennial Sale in 602 [hT 61-2]. A most estimable coin. Agreed, it was much too large in value: A coin which can purchase a comfortable lower-middle dwelling is hardly convenient pocket change. And let us further admit that it was also much too *big* — a pocketful could ruin a pair of culottes in three wearings. But in spite of its inconvenience, the Mog Moidore passed as favorite specie of high Θefarie. Alone among the objects that passed as coinage, the Moidore was *benign*. To list only a few of its advantages: It lacked sharp edges, it exuded no poisonous effluvium, it called up no demons, it did not squish or develop a mouth when pressed, it would not develop unexpected magnetism at unpropitious times, and it possessed no sudden spikes that might impale a thumb. To ðsp in his later years, it was the only coin worth carrying, though it led to hideous haggling with merchants, and a remarkable running up of bills and tabs and general debits.[1]

Truth to tell, he had his reasons. Perhaps it was his alien status, his *otherness*, that led to a well-nigh unbelievable series of misadventures with coinage, perhaps he was under a curse, perhaps he had as little monetary sense in hT as here...but he surpassed all other humanoids in that fabled land in the number of scars and other physical deformations, small and large, that had been inflicted on him by *money*. Time was when he had thoughtlessly and frequently stuck his hand into a pocket to check its contents, but a few weeks in hT changed this completely: soon, he either hired someone to do it, or removed his nether garments and gingerly prodded at the pocket with a stick — both of which expedients caused definite uneasiness. Let us say that he had been *marked* by his contacts with coinage, both physically and mentally, inside and out. Even the RepçT the anti-money[2] amulet he had worn:



[1] It may be here observed that a impressive proportion of the throngs that gathered at Turnaround for EndGame in 625 did *not* consist of prospective spectators, but frustrated merchats of all sorts who hoped to cash in their IOUs from ðsp before he was transported back to the RW, wherever that might be. What they expected to do with the money, given that it would be completely worthless — and indeed incomprehensible — after WowDay, is another matter. Hope springs eternal.

[2] No, not antimony, but anti-money.

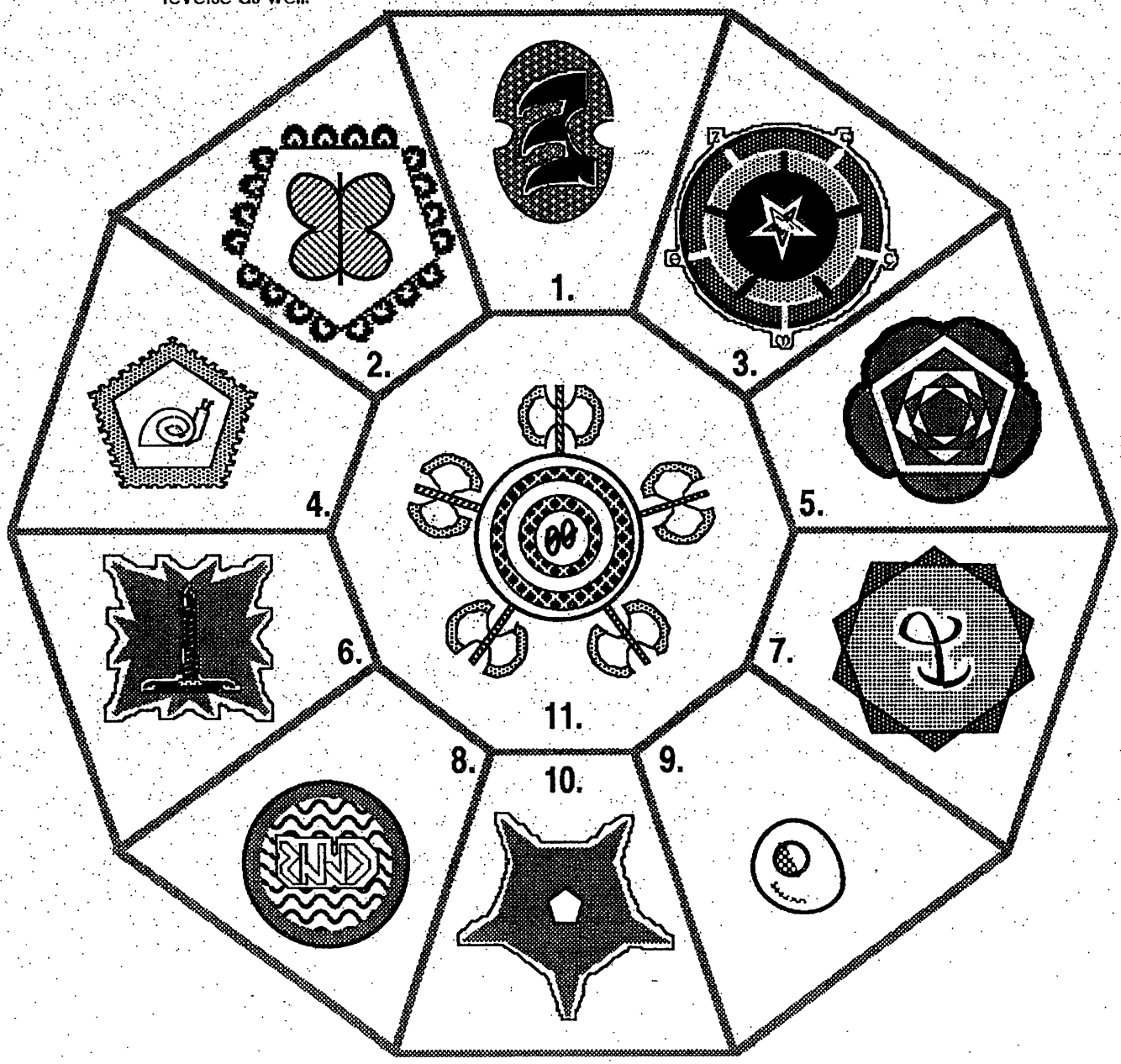
Even this had left a deep and ugly scar on his breast and his psyche.

Such is the reason, O Best Belovèd, that you shall shortly examine the coin chart on the following page and pronounce upon it. To be perfectly frank about this, ðsp would rather not think about Thefarien money *at all*. He has been traumatized, and would forget the whole business, were it not for his lust for Truth. Therefore:

Below you will find a collection of 11 (ELEVEN) Thefarien coins, traumatically encountered by ðsp during his Thefarien sojourn. Choose 3 [THREE] for treatment. For *each*, give:

1st, the name, size, worth, material, source, and baleful nature of the coin.
2nd, the incident on which ðsp came in contact with it, including the item(s) for which it was proffered or received in payment.
3rd, the resultant mark, wound, complex, or whatever received by ðsp.

☛ NB: For ONE [1] of the three coins you choose, give an exhaustive analysis of the symbolism in the decoration. Since only the obverse is shown here, describe the reverse as well.



2: LOW DIVES [3]

It seems unfitting, somehow, to grace what is very likely the last chapter in this account of Θυτα Θεϝαϝιει with a treatment of disreputable "night life." After all, this is a hallowed Otherwhere, chockfull of ethical instruction and stern moral precepts,[4] and what precepts can be gathered for The Good Life from tawdry sumps of nighttime misbehavior?

Not, of course, that δsp was an errant sinner. Far from it. Given his druthers, he would much rather have stayed home, wherever that happened to be at the moment. But, in his early Thefarien years, deducing that he would be stuck in the place for half a century, he decided that he should Get Out And Meet People. Unfortunately, the first such meeting-place that he encountered was *The Ichor-Bucket* in Arkhiv — an student hangout well thought of my the students but no one else, except the non-academic coasters and drifters who discerned easy pickings within its badly cobbled walls. He *did* meet his future spouse(s), Eniaca Omniversant, there, and that must be accounted A Good Thing, but, for the rest, the result was disastrous: in the "*Ick-Buck*," δsp developed a taste for lowlife that he was never able to shuck, even in his misanthropic Last Years, and also made the acquaintance of artistic types especially musicians and actors, who led him away from any real hope for respectability, SAUÇANT (Savior) though he was destined to be. Nearly half his life in hT was spent in "artistic" pursuits, to the great detriment of the country's peace of mind, his wife's temper, and his own self-esteem. In portions of his Middle Life, one might say that his attraction to Low Dives (PRPTY ÇLEMY) increased wildly. Not, of course, entirely due to his corrupted tastes: as a "popular musician" (the phrase is an oxymoron in Thefarien, but never mind) he gigged constantly in venues below the plimsoll of respectability, and the toll on his character matched that on his health.

Was he merely unlucky? We shall never know. *He* didn't know. But even the most casual observer, struck by the disasters that constantly struck δsp in these, well, in these *joints*, and by his well-nigh compulsive returns to locales where he had suffered grievous bodily and other harm, and conclude that his quotient of self-destructiveness must have been remarkably high.

The setter of this question, however, tends to disagree rather strenuously. There has not been sufficient study of the Dives themselves, he feels, to lead to rampant psychologizing. One must first isolate and analyze the stimuli, and only then proceed to accuse the character. "Low Dives" is, after all, a very broad term; "low" does not designate the same level in the official strictness of Enphurli as in the shoddy piety of Bolsena. It therefore devolves upon you, O Best Belovèd, to join in this highly necessary work of PPG (PsychoParaGeography) by looking at particulars.

Below, you will find the names, with location, of 12 (TWELVE) *Low Dives*, scattered over the map of high Thefarie. Each was frequented, in its time, by δsp, and each caused him rather more than at least one disaster. Choose the most significant 3 [THREE] for treatment. For each, give:

1st, a description of the *ambience* to be found therein. What was the place like? What feeling did it convey? What clientele did it attract?
2nd, the nature and cause of the particular disaster that δsp encountered in that dive. Give the date of the disaster, by the way. *And* its effect on δsp.
3rd, the attraction (music? show? companionship? food? drinks? what else?) that drew δsp back, though he knew better.

☛ NB: Each of the accounts should stress the *Thefarienness* of the Dive in question. It will doubtless suggest an analogy with a RW spot. And direct your answer to the explanation of δsp 's behavior.

☛ NB: Diagrams might not be amiss. But observe the time carefully.

1. PlongSide [*Brummagem*]
2. The Skewed Crux [*Bolsena*]
3. Sala City [*Clus*]
4. BeckonBush [*Peruç*]
5. Mudterm [*Arkhiv*]
6. Budodon [*Cer-by-the-Sea*]
7. DiggerDell [*Vei*]
8. The Dingle [*Dangley Dale*]
9. The Stygpie [*Enphurli*]
10. Swampside Hollow [*Vçen*]
11. The Sheer [*Horizon Ledge*]
12. Bide-a-Wee [*Port Farie*]

---

[3] An ugly term, but it will have to suffice. Club, Saloon, Tavern, Inn and many more are too specialized.
[4] Can they but be discerned.

Longe Questiouns from the Terminal Praxis, 1998

Libration$_2$, Γ/XV/625: EndGame

This Terminal Praxis prehandouts, taken with the Grey Dominance, have supplied more than you or I really care to know about the hT calendar, and I shall thus avoid going through that matter again. The amount of information required merely to understand these questions is immense, but I think you have enough to begin throwing your own truths back at me.

Therefore, let's get at it. Prepare to tell me how a world ends. With a bang? A whimper? A bamper?

Oh, I know, not a *real* end. high Thefarie didn't disappear; it *continued*...and is now, if "now" means anything in the realtion of two worlds in different continua. But never mind that "future" stuff. Stick to what happened.

I. Assembly, of course, Oneday of LUK, was the day that dsp should have arrived at Mt. Turnaround. He was, after all, a principal participant in EndGame. But the affair at BluRuin with the PurSuAnt had caused him more delay than he liked, and he didn't make it to Turnaround until Aspiration, which took place on Fiveday of LUK, just when every clique and claque and group had been pretty well set in final arrangement. The real story of his MadDash from Lake Ruin, fetching him up at the last possible moment, has not yet been told...or not until you elect this Questioun.

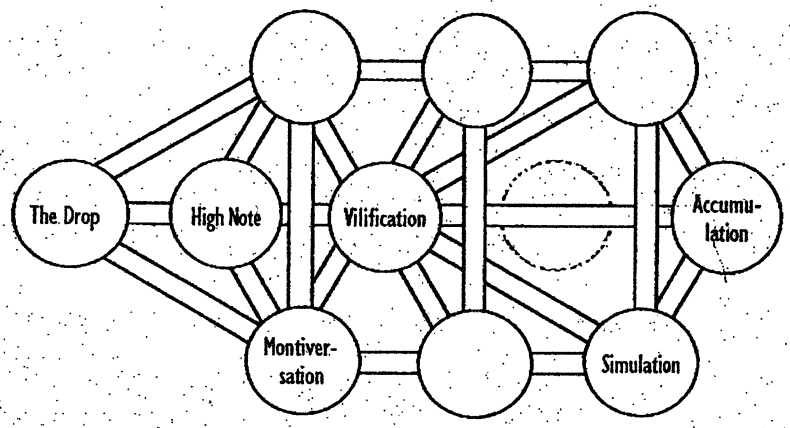
> Trace the stages of dsp's Mad Dash from BluRuin to Mt. Turnaround in LUK, 625, in considerable detail, noting with particular relish the wildness. Do not forget to add the towns of **Rimbach**, **Uttermoor**, and **Tentheim**, where, as usual, he ran afoul, plus any parageographical items you have divined on his way. Mention should be made of the Letter of Reproach from The Powers That Be that awaited him on his arrival, and of Eniaca's eventual reaction. Use the map provided and hand it in with your bluebook.

II. Simulation, of course, the second principal Event of WowDay, consists of a disquistion that treats apocalyptic themes. A sort of secular sermon, it is based for background on Chapter 25 of the Apocalypse of Taryi (to be found in hT 16, p. 23 of the Grey Dominance). As far as was known, the speaker had traditionally been a mildly illustrious elder Thefarien male civil servant who speaks in the person of the mythical Budodon the Boar. But imagine the startlement of the audience when the speaker that stepped forward this WowDay was no gaffer, by dsp's Wife 1-6, Eniaca the Omniversant. Clad in armor, she delivered, not a sermon, but a *narrative*, of all things. Worse (or perhaps better), she had adapted an early *Granfer Tale* — "Budodon's Quest", hT 12, pp. 15-18, by dsp, but, taking the part of Leinθ, the Fifth Woman, she changed it from the world's beginning to its end, and concluded with the utter flouting of the male gender. dsp felt that the world had ended early. Nothing went right after that.

> Either in whole or in summary, give Eniaca's story, showing how it follows the description above. Recall that she included a good deal from the Apocalypse of Taryi, even in this revised diatribe, and that the effect was more satire than scripture, thus upsetting the Vilificator who follows. Note the audience reaction at selected points.

III. **δsp**, of course, was unsure about much that occurred on WowDay. He had had no sleep for at least two days [54 hours, in Thefarien reckoning. Someone in charge had mislaid the fluegelhorn. Where was he to stand? And was that really a D-flat? Even when everything went off as well as could be expected — given that he was heralding the (virtual) end of the world — he found himself tortured by a question of chronology: Had he blown first, or had Mt. Turnaround turned first? If he had blown first, then he was somehow responsible for Things. He didn't mind being a Savior; in fact, he rather liked it. But the role of Destroyer was something else again. Further, what had happened when the Mountain turned? He was, as often, very confused.

First answer **δsp**'s agonized query about precedence, but then proceed to tell, and analyze while telling, the truth about Mt. Turnaround. The top came off, very probably, but then what? An emergence? A swallowing? Be thorough, and discuss in detail, and, if you can, assign causes and results. Do *not* forget to treat The Drop.



IV. The **Zephur**, of course, was not merely a flowchart, indicating the order of WowDay events. It was also, or perhaps primarily, a Map that presented, in a very stylized fashion, the *places* where those events happened, or were supposed to happen. Only stylized, of course, but you can solve it, and set reality, Thefarien reality, straight.

Using the **Zephur**, fill out at the titles in the schedule of WowDay EndGame — including the curious hidden circle under the right center. Then treat it as a map, and show what those circles really stood for. Remember that the circles can represent very different things.

V. The END, of course, did not come suddenly. The fading away of substance and consciousness took time — five days, in fact, the five days of SHAKE. A very interesting procedure.

Pick any city, in fact any location (even Mt. Turnaround) in **high Thefarie**, and trace its steady and deliberate change during the five days of SHAKE. Move from *Flaccidity* to *Flation* to *Fecklessness* through *Flatitude* and finally fetch up at the end of *Flail*. These, remember, are STATES of being as well as times. The undoing of **hT** was very complete chaos, though not ruin.

V. Your P&G, of course, will do anything for a question. He told you earlier that you were not to consider **high Thefarie**'s future. He lied.

Look at **high Thefarie** a Cycle, a mere 625 years, after **δsp**'s arrival in XV/573. What was the marvelous Otherwhere like in Δ/XVI/573? Look pick a spot, any spot, and see how it recouped from EndGame. Conjecture on the course of events in the coming of a new Cyclist, or Savior. Be thorough. Of course.

And such a time as it's been. C'est fini. Die Welt ist all. ΤΑΤÇΑ ΘΥΤΑ ΘΕΡΑΡΙΕΙ.

oh jamie get me out of this[1]

from the
PRELIMINARY STATEMENT
on the Terminal Praxis, 1999

And such a time as it's been. C'est fini. Die Welt ist all. TATÇA ΘUTA ΘEFARIEI.

And that's the way[2] it ended, the Terminal Praxis of 1998, promulgated last Spring, 14 May 1998. All done, thought ðsp. Farewell to high Θefarie XV, which had actually come to its end, RW time, on 17 May 1997, not quite a year before. Which meant that the final, the utterly final events, hadn't quite come to pass yet (in a sense) at the time of the 1997 TP, but would have to be covered in the 1998 TP. But what Your P&G hadn't reckoned was that there would have to be a TP for 1999, at least, and this would mean *more* questions, which would somehow have to be substantive, and also would have to be excogitated *after* the publication of ΘM for 1999, which meant, or would mean, that they would have to be incorporated in yet a *later* version of the Grey Dominance, that of 2000, which looked to indicate that I would be pressing ahead until circumstance jerked me bodily from the pursuit of this course, unless I started to recall an absolutely *new* otherworld, and I was too old for that, unless I spent the year from May 1999 to April 2000 reconstructing the absolutely final version of the documents and clipped the TP into the Version for 2000 immediately after administering it, sometime in May of 2000 (if we should get that far)...but would then be left with the same problem for the RW year 2001...

No. Please *No*. Please, please NOOOO.

It *had* to have a stop, he thought. This would be the ***LAST*** Terminal Praxis. After 1999, no more questions, no more plumbing the depths of anamnetic creativity, no more leaping ahead of himself just as he was about to breast the tape. No more. Especially, nothing *new*.

There was a pause, then from within, himSelf spoke. *But the* Practitioners, *the examinees for 1999—what would they do this time around? This* last *time around?*

Well, replied ðsp to himSelf, it should be quite simple, actually. They could make appendices... They could pull together facts in the *Grey Dominance*... They could even go back and answer some of the questions from previous Praxeis...

There was a shocked silence for about three beats. Then, himSelf burst forth in an angry rush:

Oh, sure! They're just students—what does it matter what *they do? Have you honestly forgotten why this whole business came up? It wasn't for* you, *not at all! It was for* them! *So*

[1] The fictional character Molly Bloom to her author, James Joyce, in the last section of *Ulysses*.

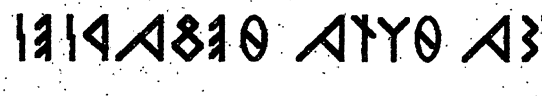
[2] Well, not quite. The pipe was right side up, still smoking, not, as above, inverted in the process of being knocked out. I *should* have inverted it. But, as usual, I was in a self-inflicted hurry, and...

that they'd make parts of your world with *you, so that they'd be your fellows in this undertaking, so that this voyare won't degenerate from a Quest to an ego-trip!*

That did it. More questions, fresh questions, spanking *new* questions, questions never thought before...those would have to make the TP for 1999. This last time, this *last* last time. Then, armed with the solutions supplied by the class of 1999, ðsp could, this next summer, at last put together the final edition, Version 10.0.

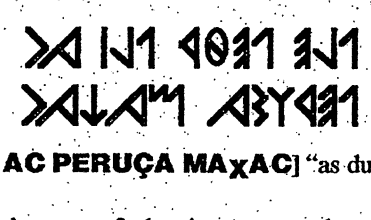
Then could it truly be said:

[illegible] [3]



But what questions am (to get out of the past tense) I (to get out of the third person) supposed to ask? All the questions that describe the Utter Ending are all there in the TPs for 1995 and 1998. And I can't have mere mere collections; appendices are as soporific as EncyclEnts, or, to use the proverb,

[illegible]



[**PLE PETHR PLI AC PERUÇA MAxAC**] "as dull as a pent in Peruç."

What can I have you (to get this out of the impersonal mode) *make* (in the peculiar sense demanded by this course and land)? I mean, I've covered the high spots. Nothing left. Just desert spots of quotidianity, the Lands of the Yawn, the...

Wait a minute. I think I have an Idea. Let me think it over while I dole out the necessary information.

Hang on.

I'll be back.

Ever solicitous of your welfare, Your Preceptor & Guide herewith pronounces, officially, the Eff-Cee, or PATAL COMMITMENT. The Long Questions, at least, in this year's TERMINAL PRAXIS will treat:

[illegible]

What was that? Once more, with feeling, and the right way around:

PERÚÇ

[3] **TA TÇA THUTA THEFARIEI** in Thefarien Runo-Retrograde. "So much for High Thefarie."

I *know* I said it was dull. Remember this?

Vest List for
PERÚÇ

Porkpie
Loafers
Sweatsox
Cutoffs
Pullover
Bellyband
Mittens
Feedbag
Hoe

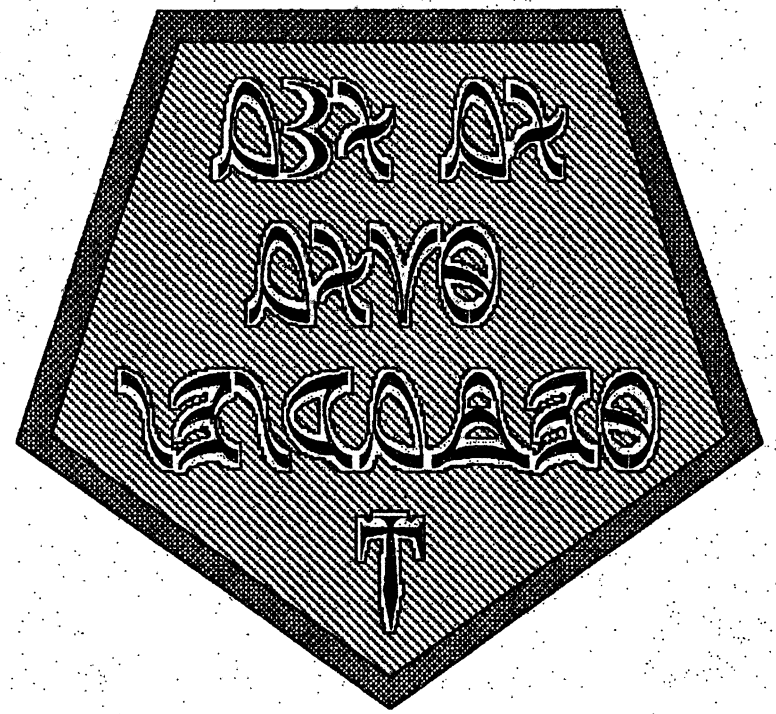
138/0

And this?

Dirge

Perúç we'll plod no pike to
We lack the Common Touch
Since who can stand the land of the bland
Where enough is way too much

But I can be wrong. And I was. And *rightly* wrong. So you'll have to wait for:

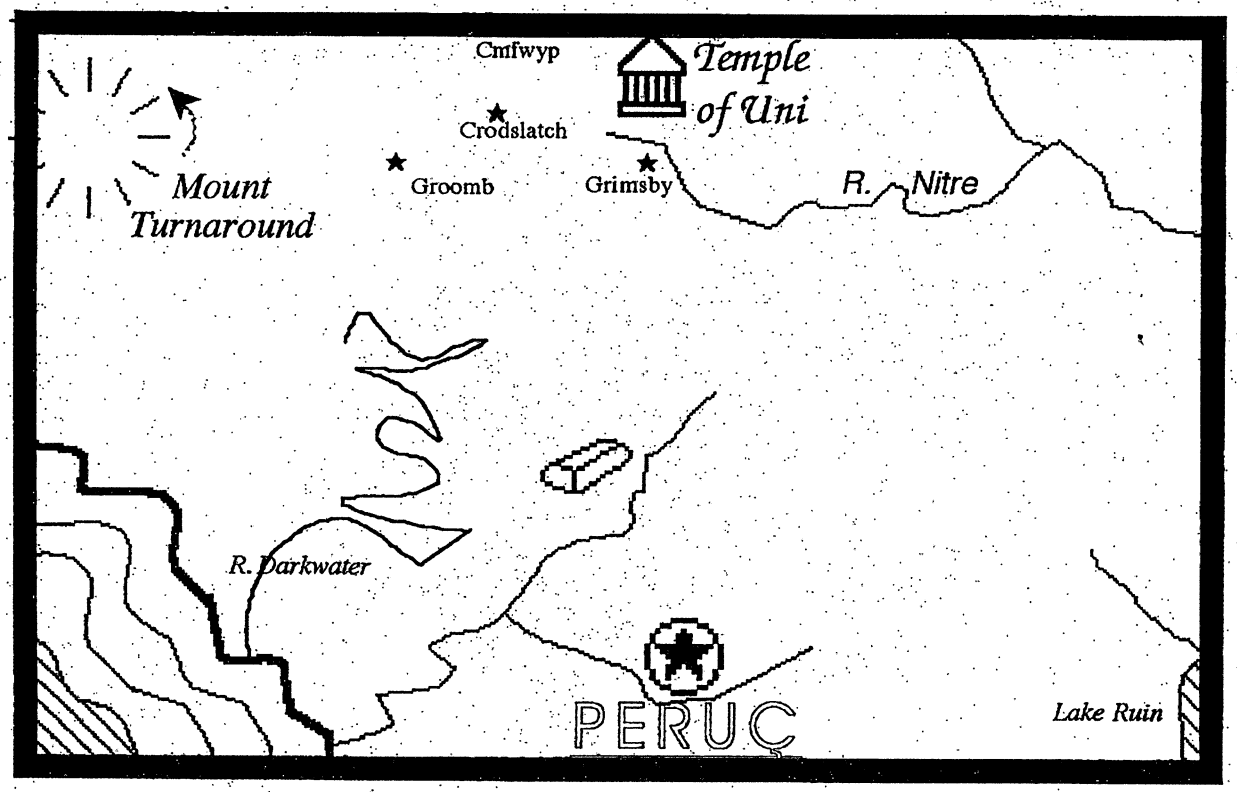
¿  ?

But drop by 103 WAG shortly [*i.e.*, May 1999] for more about

from the POST-PRELIMINARY STATEMENT on the Terminal Praxis, 1999

That's what ðsp said: **PERÚÇ**. And that's what ðsp meant.

Though he really wished that he hadn't. **PERÚÇ** had been involved, after all, in one of the less attractive sequences in his hT life, and he would much rather have let it lie there, comfortably beyond the borders of his memory, kicking up no nightmares or hyperventilating.[1] Nasty town. Uncomfortable town. *Dull* town. Just look at it on a barely adequate map:



MidNowhere. To the "East," a unbroken stretch to Lake Ruin, or BluRuin. To the "North," a waste to the outtowns of the Temple of Uni. To the "West," a shorter spread to the untenanted shore. And to the "South," oh Purθ, to the "South," a rockscape culminating in the Fatal Fells, of all the pestiferous locations. Isolated in incommodiousness. And yet...

No, that *couldn't* be right. Absolutely not. Oh, damn the map anyway, thought ðsp long after, preparing this Praxis. You couldn't depend on it at all.

---

[1] Guilt, you say? Nonsense. What are you trying to make him out to be? He was no monster, just an earnest human trying his best to get through a bad patch. Was there anything wrong with that?

There had been towns, suburbs, or at least satellitic villages out in the near-hinter. And the Dullness? Well, yes. As soporific a locale as any he could remember, in *any* world. He had expected a flood of incident, new beings, new ideas, but all he could remember was a foggy blend of the joy and perceptiveness usually attendant upon a rather bad head cold. But it wasn't just him. All high Thefarie had thought so. Remember the VestList, the prescribed clothes to be worn in that city by PENTAPOLY players?[2]

PERÚÇ

Porkpie
Loafers
Sweatsox
Cutoffs
Pullover
Bellyband
Mittens
Feedbag
Hoe
❀ 138/0

That certainly said it all: Thefarien Common Wisdom, as expressed in PENTAPOLY, the madly popular travel-game of 603, had viewed **PERÚÇ** as an enshrinement of moribund conservatism, a place for *Pastlings*, the Thefarien equivalents of *retirees*, dressed rigorously, by the rules, in the casual manner of their years of function. Prescribed sloppiness. Decreed laxity. Ridiculous, but only faintly. Mirroring the thought and the city itself.

A place that might be summed up in the whining drivel of a retired hoplite,[3] endlessly repeating the ancient tactical set for besting the Wyverns he'd never fought:

Retired Hoplite at Peruç:
Don't go in over the horns. They fly away."

In fact, Osp recalled, he'd had his say on it. Was it in the game year—603? He'd attacked the game in a parody of his own poem, "The Dirge Against The Road," titled "The Plaint Against Pentapoly."[4] The city came off as very dull.

Perúç we'll plod no pike to
We lack the Common Touch
Since who can stand the land of the bland
Where enough is way too much

Well, that seemed fair enough. When he had been there...wait a minute. When *had* he been there? Was it the *Grease Trap* Tour of 599? No, that was further "North." Brummagem, especially.[5] Where he'd lost the Address Book. The one that caused all the trouble when it was found the next year, XV/600, year of *Divorce II*.[6] Still, how could that have been connected? What...

And then it came back, the entry in the Address Book:[7]

Peaches	The Penthouse, Peruç	didn't give her full name, but I didn't think to ask

Peaches! O MUÇ!, *Peaches*! Would he ever forget her? *Could* he ever forget her?

---

[2] See *Thefarien Materials*, p. 24.
[3] See *Thefarien Materials*, p. 22, the "Epiphanic Monostichs."
[4] See *Thefarien Materials*, p. 117, n. 5.
[5] See *Thefarien Materials*, pp. 155-157, 171-186.
[6] See *Thefarien Materials*, p. 62, Long Question I.
[7] See *Thefarien Materials*, p. 26.

Well, yes. He had only the foggiest recollection now. A double image, somehow, that wavered into view when he thought thought the name:

Peaches?

Peaches?

But which one was her? Were *both* her? How could that be? And when had all this happened?...

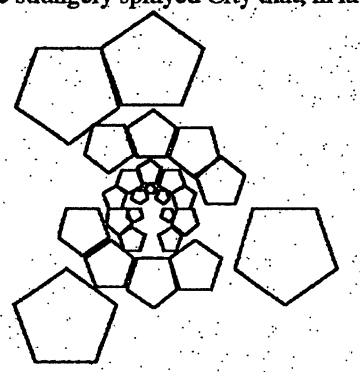
And then it all came roaring back. He had been lecturing on the roots of Thefarien Drama[8] all over the country at various Men's Institutes in Summer$_2$, 598. Stumbled into **PERÚÇ** late one evening, just in time for his turn at the local...what did they call it? *Misteak Fest*? Something like that. His spiel had gone well, but strangely so, with knowing laughs in all the wrong places from the somber, strangely dressed crowd. Laughs? In **PERÚÇ**? In Dullsville?

But it hadn't been *dull* at all. Salubrious. Exhausting. Shameless. More than a bit disgusting. And, in the final analysis. But dull, no. Especially after the, the *ritual*, when a kind lady? girl? had put him up at her place and...

How could he ever have thought **PERÚÇ** was dull? And then he knew:

His own fault. ðsp had translated the terms in the VestList loosely, as was his wont, by analogy with RW items. The analogies had evidently been drawn from the RW of the 1950's, and *none* of the items were correct. *Mittens* wasn't the right equivalent for ÞRÞTÀ. *Gauntlets* would have been closer, but that wouldn't have included the tiny spikes on the palms, and...

PERÚÇ THE DULL was his own creation. It was an underground city, no, not physically, but morally. Or ethically. Or...in any case, **PERÚÇ** was the City of Error...no, check that...the City of *Mistake*. And he'd spent five days there, and wanted to come back for more. To the strangely splayed City that, in late 598, looked light this:

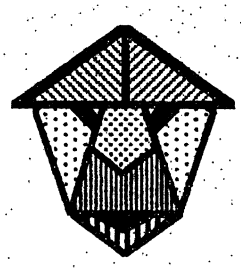


And what about Peaches? Which Peaches? And what really had happened?

And what was that strange item on the map, the somewhat to the "NWN" of **PERÚÇ** itself?

And what was the *Penthouse*? What was the *Steakhouse*? And what did it all mean

Not to mention, who was the Therapist?



But YOU know it, and YOU will tell it, come Thursday. With the help you've had here, it should be a breeze. Out of the "North-West by North," most likely. Good for fever.

---

[8] See *Ðefarien Materials*, p. 37-39.

Identification Lists from the Terminal Praxis, 1999

1: INCIDENTAL CINQUAINS[1]

In the latter chapters of Oefarien Materials, you have been blessedly spared full doses of ðsp's poetry. Not that it ran out: he indited scores, indeed hundreds, of five-line poems, indulging whenever the mood came on him—which it all too frequently did, either to produce verse for Special Occasions or to commemorate Events that he deemed important, but they were hardly functional. He had no audience except himself, until Eniaca yielded to his plaintive begging and let him teach her English.[2]

This was not the best arrangement, of course. Cinquains, which depend for their appreciation on a combination of presentations—the poem as heard and the poem as seen—don't need a large audience (in fact, they don't go well with more than a crowd of more than ten, at most), but a single person is, really, not sufficient. For one thing, the difference of opinion on which any successful audience experience depends is utterly lost. For another thing, the poet doesn't trust the reaction...especially if the audience is related to her/him by marriage.

Below, you will find TEN (10) cinquains, EIGHT (8) are by ðsp, dating from and treating of his time in high Thefarie. ONE (1) is by his wife-to-the-sixth, Eniaca Omniversant.[3] ONE (1) is by somebody/something else. Choose the most significant 3 [THREE] for treatment, ONE (2) by ðsp, the ONE (1) by Eniaca, and the ONE (1) by whoever or whatever else wrote one.[4] For each, identify the writer, then give:

1st, the event that caused the poem.
2nd, the date, place, and significance of that event. (Some of the events that come under this heading are included in the happenings recounted or referred to in Oefarien Materials; some are not. Choose what event you will—small as a walk, great as a War.)
3rd, a brief paraphrase of the poem: what does it mean in context? And what does it have to do with the event
4rd, a very, very brief critique of the poem, tearing it to shreds or praising it to the stars, or treating it somewhere in between. You may take any critical stance...or none at all.

☛ NB: For Eniaca's poem, state why she wrote it.
☛ NB: For the "other" poem, explain *how* it came to be written.

---

[1] The cinquain is not a Thefarien form; it proceeds from the early 20th century CE of the RW, and is in fact American, invented by a New England poet named Adelaide Crapsey. (Honestly. That's her name; I wouldn't make that up.) It has five lines, of 2, 4, 6, 8, and 2 syllables in that order; this totals 22 syllables. The poetics of it are somewhat like the Japanese *haiku* or *tanka*. It is probably best used in catching an image and flicking it into the pool of the reader's consciousness—though, as you can see, this was not the way ðsp usually employed it.

[2] The graciousness of this act cannot be overemphasized. She was a busy woman, wagging the world a great deal more than it did her. The acquisition opened up nothing at all to her: hT possessed no English books, entertained no Anglophones except ðsp, had no contact with the "RealWorld" (as we insist on calling it) except through that same husband, whom she knew too well already.

[3] Eniaca even wrote her own English cinquains for a while, until she saw that her skill at using her new language made her husband jealous.

[4] *But* (I hear you remark) *you said that, besides* ðsp, *only Eniaca in all of High Thefarie knew English.* True enough; so I did. That would indicate that the other-poem would be a great exception, wouldn't it? Maybe it was translated by one of the two. Maybe it constituted a Great Exception. Maybe...but why am I suggesting possibilities to you? You know the *facts*.

Cinquains of Sorts

1 Manic
is as manic
does. Feign full frenzy? Well,
unless you have a real talent,
avoid.

2 Luscious
honey comes from
the innards of some of
the most curiously managed
knapsack.

3 How 'bout
caring to share
a flattened ELTI with
the future parent of your five
confusions?

4 Downwards
rise the tense tones
bumpy with small gurgles,
ominous but impossible...
what point?

5 Kept on
sliding around
long after the sun flared,
roughing it in mud till the squelch
had dried.

6 Huh-uh.
The negative
approach flouts if no
one dies before the finale.
Oho.

7 Blowing
your first entrance
speech collapses your will
to maintain your central role as
target.

8 The twirl
foretold is the
terminal turn, last trick
of torque to trace in the trine of
trek's track.

9 Out of
supernal gloom
—here a god there a god—
divine catastrophes rumble
stomachs.

10 Unshelled
with quite a pop
come forth unyoked, shy son,
to trim your father's so flagrant
fringes.

2: PRESENTS

In our culture, the Giving of Gifts is held to be the expression of affection or praise. On the surface, at least.

We confer benefits and baubles on our near, our dear, and on others whom we hope to seem to include in those categories. The watch given for 60 years of faithful service has now the subject of bitter jokes, yet watches continue to be handed to faithful underlings who don't have all that much time left; they *have* watches, and anyway, the last item that they wish to keep track of in their brief years of leisured retirement is the *time*. But the presentation of anything superfluous and mildly expensive is held to be Nice, A Good Thing, the Simulation of the feelings and the proximity that, we fondly believe, constitute the reason for Real Gifts, the ones presented on days of commemoration and adoration. For blood ties and closeness, that's whither we give; in love and respect, that's *how* we give.

Only a complete and utter cynic would carp with this today, and I'm busy elsewhere. Let me merely point out that overweening pride, emotional blackmail, cruelty, and the production of shame have all been embodied in the gift-process, and that's *here* that I'm talking about, here in the RealWorld. A package of clothing deliberately picked too small, a vastly overexpensive geegaw that puts the recipient into well-nigh eternal obligation, a some-assembly required toy to torture the naturally clumsy, a 2-pound box of candy to ravage the victim of galloping dental caries...oh, we all know, or know of, presents of that ilk, weapons, not benefactions.

But in high Thefarie, things are different. *Gifts* are different. Our subtext is their supertext. Start with the *potlatch*, that wide scatter of presents to all and sundry to celebrate the Giver's wealth and power. We know the potlatch, we experience it...but we cover it over with a gloss of altruism, imputing only the most selfless of motives. But the Thefariens, making a large and useless gift to establish their importance, push their pride on further, turning the ceremony into an *attack*.

In fact, what we naively consider the Seven Deadly Sins—Pride, Avarice, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy, and Sloth—are perfectly acceptable reasons for a celebration, which is to say an *assault* on one's Near and Dear. As you are about to demonstrate.

Below, you will find the names10 (TEN) standard *Gifts*. (I employ the usual American terms, in "translation" by analogy. Close enough in good enough. Something like each of these items is commonly employed in celebratory ceremonies in high Thefarie, not for enemies but for friends. Each was presented, in its time, by or to bsp, and each caused him exquisite discomfort. No offense, of course. Choose the most significant 3 [THREE] for treatment. For each, give:

1st, a description of the article, and the date, place, presentation, and reason for the Gift.
2nd, a tiny sketch of the ceremony—how was the Gift Given?
3rd, a brief account (narrative will be accepted, if short) of the result, wholly disastrous to bsp, at least as he saw it.
4th, a attribution to the proper "Sin."

☛ NB: At some point, relate the locale to the Gift-ritual.

☛ NB: Diagrams or might not be amiss. But observe the time carefully.

1. A large headcover
2. A small, tarnished silver plate
3. A bunch of flowers (roselike)
4. A "necktie" in unmatching colors
5. A song
6. A middling utensil
7. A book
8. A halter
9. Five tripods (pentapods, actually)
10. A boxed bird
11. A lamp
12. A hearty meal

Longe Questiouns from the Terminal Praxis, 1997

Here are the "Long Questions"

But First....

In fact, ðsp recalled, he'd had his say on it. Was it in the game year—603? He'd attacked the game in a parody of his own poem, "The Dirge Against The Road," titled "The Plaint Against Pentapoly." The city came off as very dull.

Perúç we'll plod no pike to
We lack the Common Touch
Since who can stand the land of the bland
Where enough is way too much

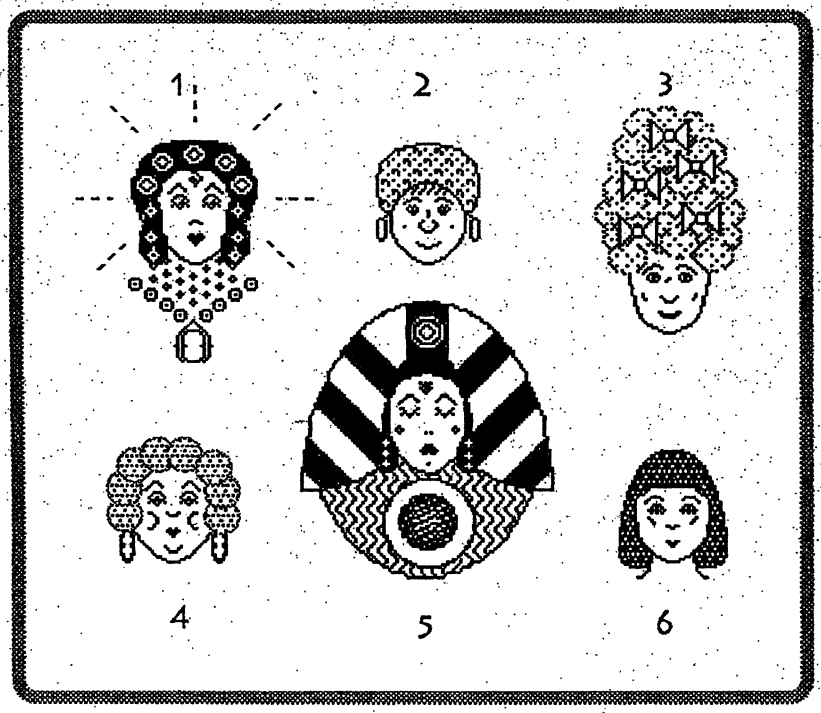
When he had been in PERÚÇ? wondered ðsp. Wait a minute. When *had* he been there? Was it the *Grease Trap* Tour of 599? No, that was further "North." Brummagem, especially. Where he'd lost the Address Book. The one that caused all the trouble when it was found the next year, XV/600, year of *Divorce II*. Still, how could that have been connected? What...

And then it came back, the entry in the Address Book:

Peaches	The Penthouse, Peruç	didn't give her full name, but I didn't think to ask

Peaches! O MUÇI, *Peaches*! Would he ever forget her? *Could* he ever forget her?

Well, yes. He had only the foggiest recollection now. A sextuple image, somehow, that wavered into view when he thought thought the name:



But which one was her? Were *all* her? How could that be? And when had all this happened?...

And then it all came roaring back. He had been lecturing on the roots of Thefarien Drama all over the country at various Men's Institutes in Summer$_2$, 598. Stumbled into **PERÚÇ** late one evening, just in time for his turn at the

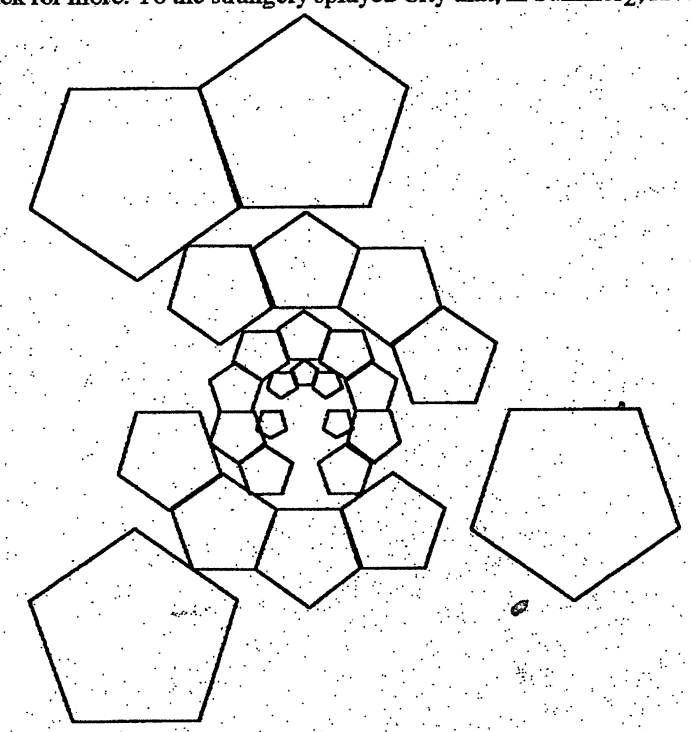
local...what did they call it? *Misteak Fest*? Something like that. His spiel had gone well, but strangely so, with knowing laughs in all the wrong places from the somber, strangely dressed crowd. Laughs? In **PERÚÇ**? In Dullsville?

But it hadn't been *dull* at all. Salubrious. Exhausting. Shameless. More than a bit disgusting. And, in the final analysis. But dull, no. Especially after the, the *ritual*, when a kind lady? girl? had put him up at her place and...

How could he ever have thought **PERÚÇ** was dull? And then he knew:

His own fault. ðsp had translated the terms in the VestList loosely, as was his wont, by analogy with RW items. The analogies had evidently been drawn from the RW of the 1950's, and *none* of the items were correct. *Mittens* wasn't the right equivalent for ÞRÞTÀ. *Gauntlets* would have been closer, but that wouldn't have included the tiny spikes on the palms, and...

PERÚÇ THE DULL was his own creation. It was an underground city, no, not physically, but morally. Or ethically. Or...in any case, **PERÚÇ** was the City of Error...no, check that...the City of *Mistake*. And he'd spent five days there, and wanted to come back for more. To the strangely splayed City that, in Summer$_2$, XV/598, had looked like this:



And what about Peaches? Which Peaches? And what really had happened?

And what was that strange item on the map, the somewhat to the "NWN" of **PERÚÇ** itself?

And what was the *Penthouse*? What was the *Steakhouse*? And what did it all mean?

Not to mention, who was the Therapist?

First, decide on Peaches. Give her number. Tell briefly why she has to be the right one.

Then, answer one (1) of the following questions.

I. "ÞERÚÇ was the City of Mistake."

Explain this in detail, using the chart on the last page and anything from the passage before, and anything else you have.

II. His own fault. ðsp had translated the terms in the VestList loosely, as was his wont, by analogy with RW items. The analogies had evidently been drawn from the RW of the 1950's, and *none* of the items were correct. *Mittens* wasn't the right equivalent for ÞRÞTÀ. *Gauntlets* would have been closer, but that wouldn't have included the tiny spikes on the palms, and..."

Explain this in detail, using the chart on the last page and anything else from the passage before, and anything else you have.

III. And what was that strange item on the map, the somewhat to the "NWN" of **PERÚÇ** itself?

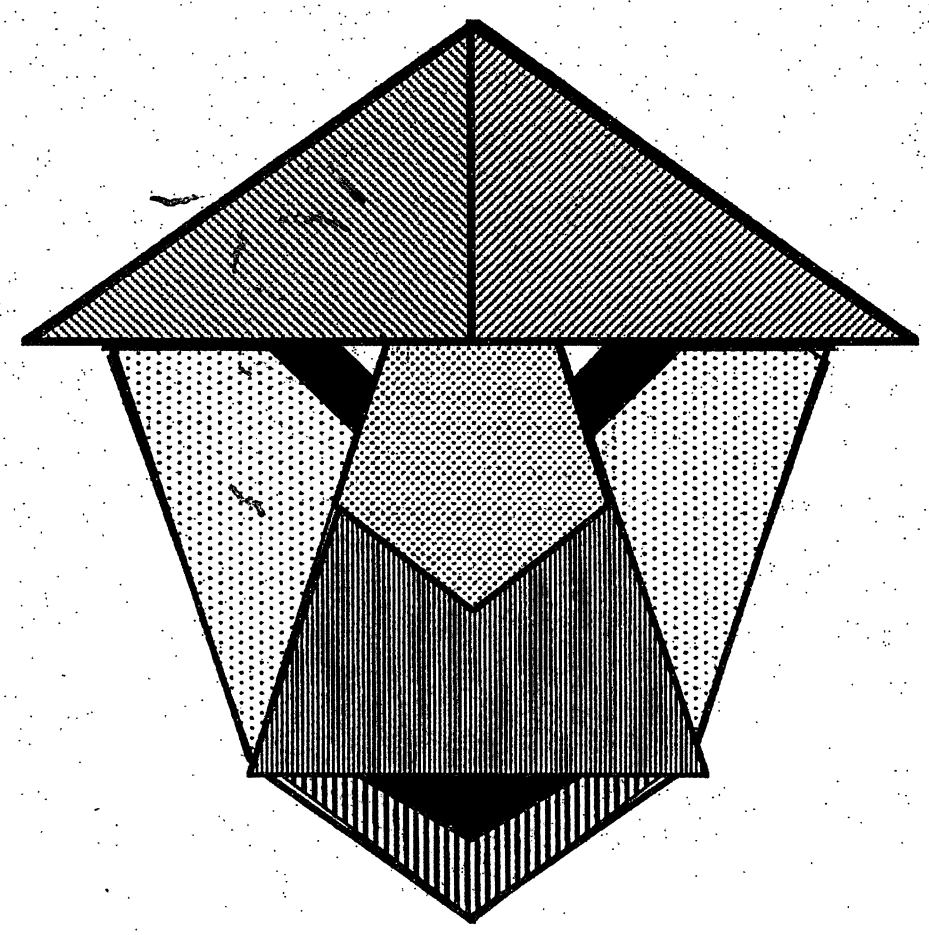
Explain this in detail, using the chart on the last page and anything else from the passage before, and anything else you have.

IV. And what was the *Penthouse*? What was the *Steakhouse*? And what did it all mean?

Explain this in detail, using the chart on the last page and anything else from the passage before, and anything else you have.

V. But it hadn't been *dull* at all. Salubrious. Exhausting. Shameless. More than a bit disgusting. And, in the final analysis. But dull, no. Especially after the, the *ritual*, when a kind lady? girl? had put him up at her place and...

Explain this in detail, using the chart on the last page and anything else from the passage before, and anything else you have.

VI. Who was the Therapist? And how did he figure in all this?

Explain this in detail, using the chart on the last page and anything else from the passage before, and anything else you have. Of course, you know who the therapist is: